

Turkish warplanes bomb northern Iraq

HAKKARI, Turkey (AP) — Turkish warplanes on Saturday bombed bases used by Turkish Kurdish guerrillas in northern Iraq for the second time this week, a local official said. Attacked in the dawn raids were camps at Hakkari and Duzi, some 10 kilometres inside Iraq, said the official on condition of anonymity. Turkey staged a similar air raid in the same area on Wednesday. Ankara says an illegal Turkish Kurdish guerrilla group, PKK, uses northern Iraq bases for hit-and-run attacks inside Turkey. There was no word about any casualties in the raids. Iraqi Kurds have claimed that past raids have caused civilian casualties among Iraqi Kurds. The Iraqi Kurds, struggling for their own autonomy from Baghdad, condemn PKK attacks. In the latest reported PKK attacks in southeastern Turkey, guerrillas killed a Muslim clergyman and his wife in a village in the province of Taurus Friday night, the Anadolu news agency said.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز يومية سياسية تصدر بالانجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية، والراي.

Volume 17 Number 5068

AMMAN SUNDAY, AUGUST 2, 1992, SAFR 3, 1413

Price: Jordan 100 fils; Saudi Arabia 1.50 riyals; UAE 1.50 dirhams

2 ministers leave Tunisian cabinet

TUNIS (R) — Tunisian Prime Minister Hamed Karoui announced a minor cabinet reshuffle Friday, replacing two ministers with men regarded as technocrats. Hedi Mhenni was named public health minister in place of Dali Jazi, a former leader of the opposition movement of Democratic Socialists who joined the government in 1990. Ahmad Smaoui, an independent member of the government, was replaced at the Social Affairs Ministry by Muhammad Fadhil Khelil. Mongi Safra took over from Mr. Mhenni as secretary of state to the prime minister in charge of scientific research and technology. His post of secretary of state in charge of trade went to Salah Hambl, formerly general director of trade. Ali Chaouch was appointed secretary of state to the Public Health Ministry.

Atlantic blasts off on new mission

CAPE CANAVERAL, Florida (R) — The U.S. shuttle Atlantis took off on a daring mission to generate electricity by dragging a satellite through space on a spaghetti-thin cable, an experiment some compare to holding a tiger by the tail. Atlantis rocketed from its coastal launch pad in Florida at 1356 GMT. If not for a 45-second holdup while co-pilot John Allen switched on the ship's hydraulic system, it would have been the first on-time liftoff in 25 flights since 1985. The 22-hour experiment is scheduled to take place on Monday and Tuesday and officials have described the \$376 million project as the most complicated and difficult ever undertaken by a shuttle crew.

Iraq denies dissolving national carrier

BAGHDAD (R) — Iraq has denied it was dissolving its national carrier, Iraqi Airways, after the grounding of most of its fleet by U.N. sanctions since the start of the Gulf war. The director-general of the Iraqi Airways Company, Noureddin Al Saffi, in a statement to Al Qadisiyah daily, denied rumours that the company would be dissolved and its employees transferred to other government offices. Mr. Saffi said the company was still financially committed to its more than 4,000 employees. Domestic flights between Baghdad and Basra were halted last month because of a lack of spare parts and U.N. sanctions have closed Iraq's airspace to international flights. The Security Council's Sanctions Committee rejected in March an Iraqi request for an airliner to be allowed to operate one flight daily between Baghdad and Amman. Mr. Saffi said last month the company had lost more than \$200 million as a result of the sanctions.

Mine defused near ex-Yemeni premier's home

SANAA (R) — Yemeni security has defused a mine outside the home of an ex-prime minister of former South Yemen, just an hour before it was set to blow up, an official newspaper reported. "The mine was hidden in a carton box outside the home of Mohamad Ali Hathem, who at the time was inside his house" in Sanaa, Al Thawra daily quoted a security source as saying. Mr. Hathem is a member of the Yemen Socialist Party (YSP) that ruled South Yemen until it merged with the North in May 1990. The Aden-based YSP has lost several members recently in attacks, mainly in the capital Sanaa and nearby provinces.

Guns kill Turkish journalist

ISTANBUL (R) — Unidentified gunmen shot dead a journalist working for the Istanbul-based leftist daily Ozgur Gundem in the southeastern town of Gergus, staff of the newspaper said Saturday. They said Yahya Orhan was hit by automatic weapon fire as he walked to his home on Friday night. On Wednesday another journalist working for a pro-Kurdish weekly was killed in the nearby town of Batman, also by unidentified gunmen.

PLO protests exclusion of any reference to it from Lower House's statement

By Narmeen Murad
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Saturday expressed dissatisfaction over a Jordanian parliamentary statement on the Palestinian problem saying it failed to mention the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinian people and did not go far enough in calling for an independent Palestinian state. The Lower House's statement, which was drafted by the House's Committee on Palestine Affairs and passed by a majority of the House on Wednesday, was seen by the PLO as an attempt to outbid the organisation for its position on interim self-government in the occupied territories and a solution to Jerusalem's status suggesting that the organisation was falling into a trap set up by the U.S. and aimed at liquidating the Palestinian problem. A statement issued by an unnamed Palestinian spokesman and distributed by the Palestinian news agency Wafa from Tunis

blasted the House for establishing "a precedent in Jordanian-Palestinian relations." The strongly-worded three-page communique described the House's statement as "a non-positive interference in our internal Palestinian affairs."

The harsh response, according to analysts, was apparently triggered by the statement's obvious adaptation of a line by the Muslim Brotherhood and far-left deputies which rejects the PLO's "monopoly" on representation of Palestinians and the appointment of members of the Palestine National Council (PNC) from the different PLO factions. In a statement distributed to the press Saturday, the Palestinian ambassador to Jordan, Al Tayyeh Abdul Rahim, pinpointed these points of contention between Fatah, the mainstream faction in the PLO, and Hamas, the military wing of the Muslim Brotherhood movement. But he also attempted to soften the Palestinian response to the House's statement. The PLO "is convinced that the Jordanian Lower House ... adheres to the

fact that the organisation is the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people," Mr. Abdul Rahim said. "Ignoring the PLO and failing to mention that it is the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people was not appreciated, especially since many parties are now seeking to undermine the PLO and its role in the peace process," Mr. Abdul Rahim said. But he added that the PLO assumed that dropping a mention of the PLO in the House's statement had "happened inadvertently." However, a Muslim Brotherhood deputy, Hammam Said, rejected this assumption and said that the House planned not to mention the PLO "but not out of lack of respect for the organisation or as a way to attack it." Mr. Said, an Amman deputy, said the House, which represents several schools of thought, "could not all possibly adopt the same view of the PLO or the Arab governments." "We hope that our words are not understood as undermining

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Representative committee rejects Israeli-engineered expulsion deals

By Ayman Al Safadi
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A committee representing expelled Palestinians Saturday rejected voluntary expulsion of Palestinians from the occupied territories as illegal and called on Jordan to close its borders to Palestinians expelled by the Israeli occupation authorities. In a statement issued in Amman, committee President Ibrahim Bakr also called on the Palestinian leadership to take all the necessary measures to prevent Israel from expelling Palestinians by mutual agreement. Mr. Bakr said that mutually agreed-upon expulsion is illegal because it violates the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Fourth Geneva Convention which prohibits the "transfer" of people living under occupation to other countries. "The General Assembly and the Security Council of the United Nations have issued many resolutions condemning Israeli decisions to expel Palestinians and consider these decisions null and void," Mr. Bakr's statement said.

The U.N. has also affirmed the right of return of Palestinians but, he said, Israel aims the U.N. resolutions because of the support it gets from the United States and its disregard for international legitimacy. Mr. Bakr said that Israel maintains its expulsion policy because it wants to empty the occupied territories of their Palestinian inhabitants and replace them with "Israeli occupiers." Mr. Bakr said Israel had been forcing young Palestinians to accept expulsion by making them sign statements saying that they will not return to the occupied territories for three years before granting them permissions to leave the occupied territories. He said Israel has been particularly targeting leaders of the intifada. Mr. Bakr warned that Israel was attempting to use the recent expulsion of six Palestinian students from Al Nahla University as a precedent for expelling other Palestinians through voluntary expulsion deals. Six Palestinian students from

Al Nahla University last month accepted an Israeli offer to go into a three-year voluntary exile to defuse a week-long stand-off. Israel this week offered 11 Palestinians who were slated for expulsion by the government of former Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir to go into three-year voluntary exile but they rejected the deal and demanded to be freed. A nationalist Palestinian leader Friday said the 11 Palestinians will not accept any deal. "What happened at Al Nahla was an incorrect decision," Palestinian leader Riad Al Malki was quoted as saying. The 11 Palestinians challenged Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, who has pledged to accelerate the peace process, to prove his intentions by cancelling their expulsion orders. "We want this issue to be a sticky issue; we want to embarrass Rabin," Mr. Malki said. If Mr. Rabin's claims that he wants to accelerate the peace process are true, "why is he continuing the expulsion policy?" said Mr. Bakr.

Turkey, Syria discuss sensitive water issue

DAMASCUS (Agencies) — Turkish Foreign Minister Hikmet Cetin flew in Saturday amid increasing cries of protest from Syria and Iraq against Turkey's claim to the waters of the Euphrates and Tigris rivers. His visit came a week after Turkish Premier Suleyman Demirel claimed his country had rights to all waters of the two rivers before they cross into the two Arab countries. "These cross-border rivers are ours to the very point at which they cross the border," Mr. Demirel said on the occasion of the inauguration of the giant Ataturk Dam. "These statements were misunderstood. We are still committed to our treaty of 1987 with Syria," Mr. Cetin said. But Syrian Foreign Minister Farouq Al Sharaa, who welcomed Mr. Cetin at the airport, said Mr. Demirel's remarks had created a lot of disappointment in Syria. "Regardless of the corrections made later and the statement I heard from the foreign minister of Turkey, I say these statements (by Mr. Demirel) were disappointing to the Syrian people," Mr. Sharaa said. He said the cause of the disappointment "is not only because these statements contradicted international laws and conventions and treaties signed between Turkey and Syria but because they came while Syrian-Turkish ties were at their best shape since

World War II." The 1987 treaty signed by the two countries commits Turkey to maintain the flow of Euphrates waters into Syria through the Ataturk Dam at 500 cubic metres per second. Mr. Sharaa said Syria was keen to improve ties with Turkey, "the friend and neighbour," through dialogue and consultations. He expressed hope Mr. Cetin's visit would help "remove the misunderstanding in which the media played a negative role." Mr. Demirel's statements have been received with profound discontent in the Arab World. In Syria, government-run media called them a flagrant violation of international law. The daily newspaper Al Thawra said Mr. Demirel's statement was "extremely arbitrary ... and if Turkey does not take into account good neighbourliness and cordial relations between the two countries, international law will prevent it from cutting the flow of waters to its neighbours." Iraq's government-run media also has criticised Mr. Demirel's remarks. Turkey allows an average flow of 500 cubic metres per second downstream. But both Syria and Iraq find it insufficient. While Syrians worry about insufficient water flow, Turkey's major concern is the Kurdish attacks along its southeastern borders. Turkey and Syria share a 900-kilometre border.

Tunisia cuts ties with Sudan

TUNIS (AP) — Tunisia has broken diplomatic relations with Sudan for its "hostile" positions and "flagrant meddling" in Tunisia's internal affairs. The Friday night announcement carried by the official TAP news agency made no reference to Sudan's announcement a day earlier that it was cutting diplomatic ties; nor did it refer to official concerns over an alleged link between the Sudanese government and Tunisian Muslim fundamentalists. The announcement by the Tunisian Foreign Ministry said only that the decision to close its embassy in Khartoum was based on the "hostile" positions of the Sudanese government and "flagrant meddling" in internal affairs. "Inadmissible practices" include "preaching violence, calling for sedition and mixing in the internal affairs of Tunisia," the ministry announcement said without elaboration. Tunisia's state-run media has accused Sudan of backing the fundamentalist movement — charges Sudan denies. Sudan said Thursday its decision to break ties was based on the "unjust Tunisian media campaign" and "bad treatment of Sudanese subjects passing through Tunisian territory." On Oct. 15, the Tunisian government recalled its ambassador to Khartoum to protest alleged Sudanese aid to the fundamentalist Al Nahdha movement.

2 hurt in Algerian mosque bombing

ALGIERS (AP) — A homemade bomb exploded outside a mosque popular with hardline Muslim fundamentalists during weekly prayers Friday, slightly injuring two people, the official APS news agency reported. No one claimed responsibility for the explosion, which came amid a wave of bomb and gun attacks widely believed to be the work of fundamentalists fighting a harsh government campaign to crush their movement. The blast took place at the Salaheddin Al Ayoubi mosque in the fundamentalist neighbourhood of Belcourt. It is popularly known as the Kabal Mosque, a reference to Algerian veterans of the Afghan war who held sway there. Fundamentalist activity at the mosque disappeared after the military-backed regime banned political activities at mosques in February and banned the Islamic Salvation Front, Algeria's largest opposition party.

Regent stresses need to absorb concept of human rights in development

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Saturday held a meeting with Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker at the Prime Ministry. The meeting, which was attended by Royal Court Chief Khaled Al Karaki, reviewed domestic and foreign issues, Jordan Television reported. Prince Hassan then chaired part of a Cabinet meeting and issued directives on a number of issues of concern to citizens. The Crown Prince stressed at the meeting the need to expand in



The Cabinet resumed its regular session after Prince Hassan left. No further detail was immediately available.

Jordan receives invitation to talks

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan Saturday received an invitation to attend the sixth round of Arab-Israeli bilateral peace talks in Washington beginning Aug. 24 and slated to last for a month, Foreign Minister Kamel Abu Jaber said Saturday. The invitation was delivered jointly by the ambassadors of the United States and Russia, the co-sponsors of the talks, Dr. Abu Jaber said. "We received the invitation today for the talks beginning on Aug. 24, running through Sept. 23," Dr. Abu Jaber told the Jordan Times, adding that the government had not taken a decision on it yet. Officials expected a formal

decision to be taken and announced soon, probably Sunday. Comments by a U.S. State Department spokeswoman on Friday indicated that the suggested Aug. 24 date was subject to agreement from all parties concerned. "The co-sponsors are now consulting with the parties about dates for the next round to begin in Washington," spokeswoman Sondra McCarty said, adding that there had been "no decisions yet." "We will announce the dates of the next round after all parties have agreed," she told a Washington press briefing. Lebanon, Syria and Israel also have received the co-sponsors' invitation to the Washington meeting, which, for the first time,

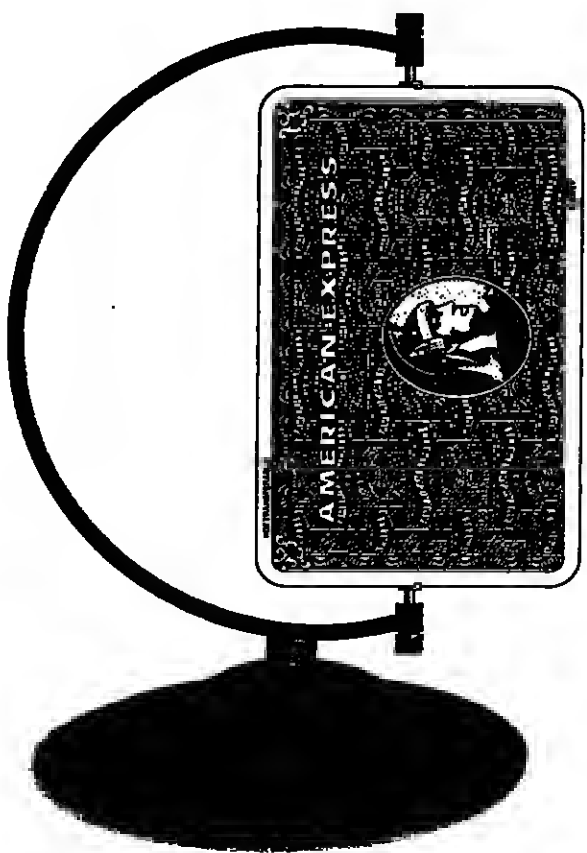
will last one month. An invitation was also being delivered to the Palestinian delegation in occupied Jerusalem, reports said. None of the parties have announced their agreement to the suggested dates yet. All Arab parties to the peace talks — Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and the Palestinians — met in Damascus last month and decided to attend the new round of talks. They left it to the co-sponsors to decide the venue and date. The extension of the talks to one month falls in line with Arab as well as Israeli suggestions to hold continued meetings rather than short bursts like the last five rounds which have produced little tangible results. The new Israeli prime minister, Yitzhak Rabin, has made peace talks one of the priorities for his government.

Israeli soldiers rampage in Gaza

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Israeli soldiers went on the rampage in a refugee camp in the occupied Gaza Strip Friday after unknown assailants threw a grenade at their jeep, residents said. The soldiers broke into homes and a school in the Jabalya refugee camp, destroying furniture and ripping posters inside a kindergarten. They also smashed cars, residents said. An army spokeswoman said she knew nothing about the incident. Four Palestinians from the Gaza Strip suspected of collaborating with Israel were found dead on Friday, witnesses said. Witnesses said three masked Palestinians shot Sad Ferwana, 30, six times in front of a mosque in southern Gaza. Palestinian sources said another of the dead was a Gazan kidnapped by masked activists earlier this week and questioned on possible collaboration. They said the other two were also suspected of having aided Israel, but the circumstances of their killings were unclear. In another development, Israel has decided to impose tighter controls on army undercover units following a report critical of discipline and operational performance in their ranks, security sources said. The report compiled by reserve Brigadier General Moshe Givati harshly criticised the undercover

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Cyprus talks said moving to constitutional issues

UNITED NATIONS (R) — Turkish-Cypriot leader Rauf Denktaş said Friday his talks with Secretary-General Boutros Ghali would move on to constitutional matters next week while his technical experts continued discussions with the United Nations on the unresolved territorial issue.

"I think we shall be going on to other matters next week while a committee will be working on the map to see how we can settle on '29 plus'," he told Reuters.

The term "29 plus" is diplomatic shorthand for the percentage of Cypriot territory that Mr. Denktaş has said he is willing to accept under a federation with the Greek Cypriots.

The Turkish Cypriots at present control about 37 per cent of the island's territory.

Cyprus has been virtually partitioned since 1974 when Turkish troops landed in the north of the island after a coup in Nicosia engineered by the junta then ruling Greece.

Mr. Denktaş said the committee he referred to would consist of his own technical experts, who would discuss territorial matters with the United Nations.

At the same time, he said, he and the secretary-general would tackle constitutional aspects of the proposed federation.

Mr. Denktaş and Cypriot President George Vassiliou, representing the Greek Cypriot community, have been holding separate meetings here with Dr. Ghali on efforts to reunite the island under a bizonal, bicommunal federal government. The talks, which began last month, resumed on July 15 after a three-week break.

The focus so far has been on efforts by the secretary-general to persuade Mr. Denktaş to accept proposals and a map which the U.N. chief gave to both sides.

Turkish Cypriots have complained that the U.N. proposals would not only reduce their share of territory to about 28 per cent



George Vassiliou



Rauf Denktaş

but also require them to give up the town of Morphou and its well-watered surrounds in the northwest of the island, in addition to several dozen villages.

Mr. Denktaş disclosed how he expected the talks to proceed after holding a 45-minute meeting with American U.N. representative Edward Perkins and Nelson Ledsky, the U.S. special envoy on Cyprus.

The Turkish Cypriot leader had asked for a meeting with the five permanent members of the Security Council — the United States, Britain, China, France and Russia — who are following the negotiations closely and have been urging him to accept the U.N. proposals.

But after receiving a briefing from Dr. Ghali on Thursday evening on the difficulties he had encountered, the five decided that the United States, as the group's correct coordinator, would see Mr. Denktaş on their behalf and continue to press him on the U.N. proposals.

When constitutional issues come up for discussion, Mr. Denktaş is expected to pursue a demand for the presidency of the future Cyprus federation to rotate between the two communities — something Mr. Vassiliou opposes.

Another bone of contention is likely to be the number of posts on the federal council of ministers held by each community. The U.N. proposals call for a seven to three ratio between Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot ministers, but according to one source, Mr. Denktaş may seek a larger share.

The north Cypriot parliament on Friday criticised Dr. Ghali for what it said were attempts to impose a Cyprus solution.

The assembly of the self-declared Turkish republic of north Cyprus (TRNC) passed a resolution charging that Dr. Ghali had exceeded his good offices mission in the peace talks.

"He has adopted an unfair, imbalanced and unjustified method to impose a solution in Cyprus," the 50-seat assembly said. "Such a solution will not be the result of the free will of the Turkish-Cypriot people and will be rejected."

It accused Dr. Ghali of putting personal pressure on Mr. Denktaş to accept Greek-Cypriot demands.

"Any result achieved through pressures and threats will not serve lasting peace and pave the way for new wars," it added.

Criticism of Dr. Ghali's handling of the peace talks has also been echoed widely in the mainland Turkish press.

Turkey's rebel Kurds close key route to north Iraq

ANKARA (R) — Turkey's rebel Kurds have cut a key supply route for Kurdish-held northern Iraq, which is already in the grip of an economic blockade imposed by the Iraqi government.

The Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) is apparently retaliating against the de facto Iraqi Kurdish government which has pledged to do its best to halt attacks on Turkey by PKK guerrillas based in northern Iraq.

"This act is against our nation in collusion with the (Iraqi) regime. The PKK is coordinating with (the regime), Serchil Qazaz, Ankara representative of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, said.

Witnesses said the Habur border bridge crossing, usually used by 500 trucks a day plying a lucrative food-for-diesel trade between Turkey and Iraq, was deserted on Friday.

"It's been like this for a week," said an employee at the frontier. "The border is open, but no trucks are entering Iraq."

He said the only traffic had been a few Turkish trucks returning empty from northern Iraq, where Kurds are enduring an economic embargo imposed by Baghdad eight months ago.

PKK militants have threatened to punish drivers hauling goods into Iraq and on July 22 burned three trucks in Turkish territory to show they were serious.

Mr. Qazaz accused the PKK of preventing the return of displaced Iraqi Kurdish civilians to destroyed villages near the Turkish border and of requisitioning food from Kurdish farmers.

He said the prices of many foodstuffs had doubled in Iraq Kurdistan, heavily dependent on food imports from Turkey.

"Sugar was about seven dollars a kilo. Now it is 14 or 15," he said. The Iraqi dollar, worth 33.2 at the official rate, trades at 20 to the dollar on the black market.



REGENT MEETS PREMIER: His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Saturday holds talks with Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker (Petra photo)

Gemayel returns home from self-exile in France

BEIRUT (AP) — Former President Amin Gemayel has returned from voluntary exile to support right-wing Christians trying to block next month's general elections until Syrian forces move out of Beirut.

Mr. Gemayel fled to France in September 1988, when his six-year term ended with parliament unable to convene to elect a successor.

He arrived after nightfall at the Jounieh port, in the Christian heartland north of Beirut, by boat from the Cypriot port of Larnaca, radio stations reported.

He and his wife, Joyce, headed immediately to Dikri — a mountain resort above Jounieh — where they met with Patriarch Nasrallah Sfeir, the head of the Maronite Catholics.

Mr. Gemayel was at odds with the main fighting forces of the Maronites when he left the country. But Maronite intermediaries have in recent weeks shuttled between Beirut and Paris to arrange a Christian reconciliation and close ranks to oppose the elections set for Aug. 23.

Maronite leaders, including the patriarch, have expressed fears that elections in the shadow of a strong Syrian military presence would produce a rubber stamp pro-Syrian parliament.

The Syrians have 40,000 troops

in Lebanon under a 1976 Arab League peacekeeping mandate. They control two thirds of the country and support the plans of President Elias Hrawi's government to hold the elections.

Elections to be held before September were one of the main terms of an agreement that ended the 1975-90 civil war.

The first poll in 20 years is to produce a 120-seat, half-Christian, half-Muslim house and end the supremacy Maronites had enjoyed since independence from France in 1943.

Debt repayment postponed

France granted Lebanon a partial postponement Friday on about 500 million francs (\$100 million) of debt stemming from military sales.

The agreement came at the end of a five-day visit by Lebanese Prime Minister Rashid Solh capped by talks Thursday with President Francois Mitterrand.

The economics ministry said that Lebanon had agreed to make a payment during the fall representing roughly 10 per cent of the military debt. Two additional payments of the same size will be made during the second half of 1993.

In return, France has agreed to postpone payment on the remain-



Amin Gemayel

der until 1994. Another 500 million francs (\$100 million) owed to France are not covered by the accord, a ministry spokesman said.

Provided the initial payment is made in the fall, the spokesman said Economics Minister Michel Sapin is prepared to lend 65 million francs (\$13 million) to Lebanon at concessional interest rates to help rehabilitate the war-torn country's infrastructure.

France is also ready to unfreeze previous credits totaling about 50 million francs (\$10 million). The countries discussed credits for the Lebanese army, but nothing was finalised.

France, the former colonial power in Lebanon, has maintained close links with the country's leadership despite the long civil war.

Egypt presses crackdown on extremism

CAIRO (AP) — In a continuous crackdown on Muslim extremists, security forces Friday arrested 20 alleged militants, including a Sudanese and a Jordanian.

The daily state-run Al-Ahram said in its early Saturday edition the arrested men were responsible for recent violence in the southern Egyptian town of Dairut, 300 kilometres south of Cairo.

Since January, 40 people have been killed and 64 wounded in attacks blamed on Muslim extremists. Most of the incidents took place in Dairut and casualties included Copts, policemen and innocent bystanders.

Security forces found the extremists hiding out in an apartment in the Mediterranean city of Alexandria, to which they had fled from southern Egypt, the paper said. It said they included a Sudanese and a Jordanian.

Security officials have said Muslim extremists smuggle in arms from Sudan, but this is the first time this year that non-Egyptians have been arrested.

Police sources were unavailable for comment.

Sob-machine guns, explosives and anti-government leaflets were also found in the apartment, Al-Ahram said.

Among those arrested were leaders responsible for setting off two small bombs near the Pharaonic temple of Karnak in the historic city of Luxor, 720 kilometres south of Cairo. No one was hurt, but in a second attack on a tourist bus in Luxor early this month, four foreigners were slightly injured.

Muslim militants seek to force the government to implement Islamic law.

Iran denies working on nuclear or chemical arms

BONN (R) — Iran has no interest in developing nuclear, chemical or biological weapons, Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati was quoted on Friday as saying.

In an interview in Tehran with the respected German daily Frankfurter Allgemeine he was asked about reports that Western intelligence services had estimated Iran would be able to test its own nuclear warheads by the end of the decade.

"I categorically reject the allegation that Iran is developing nuclear weapons," Mr. Velayati was quoted as saying.

"We also take a negative stand towards chemical and biological weapons," he added.

In an apparent reference to the former Soviet Union, Mr. Velayati said some countries which had been nuclear powers were now asking the West for money to scrap their arsenals.

For that reason it would be "a stupid policy for some countries to continue to seek possession of nuclear weapons," he said.

Mr. Velayati, who was in Bonn for talks in July, said he expected German Chancellor Helmut Kohl to visit Tehran later this year or early in 1993.

By then a date should also be set for a Bonn visit by Iranian President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, the foreign minister said.

Mr. Kohl and Mr. Rafsanjani exchanged invitations last year. Mr. Velayati's stay in Bonn ended with Germany and Iran agreeing to improve their political and economic ties despite differences over human rights in Iran.

Iran, seeking closer ties with the West under the pragmatic team of Mr. Rafsanjani and Mr. Velayati, has said Germany could

Dependence

Iraqi Kurds do not only need Turkish food. Turkey is allowing its Iskril base to be used by Western aircraft whose de facto autonomy from Baghdad.

The PKK's cross-border raids provoke reprisal strikes by the Turkish air force. The violence discourages Iraqi Kurdish civilians from resettling their mountain homes.

Kurdish sources say the PKK's intimidation of fellow-Kurdish truck drivers began after Iraqi Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP) Peshmarga guerrillas swooped on PKK bases in northern Iraq.

The KDP cracked down after gunmen killed a KDP member in the Iraqi border town of Zakho. The KDP blamed the PKK for the murder, which appeared to be revenge for the killing of a PKK supporter, Sadiq Omar, in June, the source said.

For now, the PKK action has put paid to a roaring illicit trade in cheap Iraqi diesel, bought in the city of Mosul and carried to huge spare tanks strapped beneath Turkish trucks.

A U.N. official trying to arrange the repatriation of 15,000 Iraqi Kurdish refugees who fled to Turkey in 1988 said drivers were asking double the previous rates for the trip to Iraq.

"It seems fear has overcome the temptation to go to Mosul," said the official, who asked not to be named.

Israeli abuse of U.S. military aid, refusal to cooperate in probe come under fire in Congress

WASHINGTON (USIA) — A key Defence Department official has told Congress there is no need to increase oversight of Israel's 1,800-million annual military aid grant which is up for renewal in October despite recent revelations that high-ranking Israeli officials misappropriated approximately \$40 million of U.S. military assistance funds.

Lieutenant-General Teddy Allen, director of the Defence Security Assistance Agency, told the investigations sub-committee of the House Energy and Commerce Committee Thursday that abuses within the U.S. Foreign Military Financing (FMF) programme with Israel were "the first instance of fraud in the Israeli programme in 18 years."

Gen. Allen characterised the multi-million dollar fraud involving military equipment to Israel as a case of "collusion between senior individuals within the Israeli air force and General Electric."

In the first of a series of hearings on the military purchasing scandal before General Electric and the government of Israel, the panel chaired by John Dingell (Democrat of Michigan) also heard testimony from the chairman of the General Electric Co., John F. Welch, and Frank Doyle,

its senior vice-president.

In his opening remarks, Mr. Dingell said "there is much we do not know" about the General Electric case and that "a major reason" for that was that "Israel has flatly denied requests of the Department of Justice, of this subcommittee, and of others to interview General Ramli Dotan, who was imprisoned by Israeli authorities last year for diverting U.S. military aid, and his financial adviser, Harold Katz, a former Israeli defence ministry lawyer, and other central figures in this scandal."

Gen. Allen, in prepared remarks to the panel, said administration officials, in keeping with the grant agreement between the Israeli government and the Department of Defence, have repeatedly sought direct access to several high-ranking Israeli officials key to the General Electric case, including Gen. Dotan.

He said the U.S. does not accept Israel's position that the text of the grant agreement excuses Israeli non-compliance for reasons of "sovereignty, national security and the public interest."

"The administration still believes that the government of Israel is required to provide direct access to all persons involved in the Dotan case," he

said.

"The (Israeli government) is aware that one of the options available to the U.S. government, should we ever doubt the sincerity of their efforts or the efficacy of their internal controls, is to severely limit or even terminate the programme under which direct commercial contracts are funded," Gen. Allen pointed out.

Gen. Allen said the grant agreement signed by Israel providing \$1,800 million in U.S. military aid, requires Israel to give U.S. investigators direct access to witnesses in any investigation involving the aid programme.

In later questioning by the committee, Gen. Allen said the Israeli government has advised that it will send a delegation "within the month" to consult on the impasse.

Gen. Dotan, the former quartermaster of Israel's air force, is serving a 13-year prison term for his role in diverting U.S. military aid funds by creating thousands of false vouchers to fund military equipment that was never produced and by inflating the price of other equipment.

Mr. Dingell said the found it inconceivable that Gen. Dotan had built power plants and engine

U.S. to send 2,400 troops to Kuwait

WASHINGTON (R) — The United States, flexing its military muscle against Iraq, will begin sending 2,400 troops to Kuwait next week for war games in addition to two navy and marine exercises already set there, the Pentagon said on Friday.

Defence officials said the troops will be flown to Kuwait from Texas and Kentucky in an exercise which had been planned for later in the year but was pushed back because of a confrontation between Iraq and the United Nations over arms inspections.

The new exercise, which will involve armoured troops, will test the ability of American troops to get to the Gulf quickly and link up with military equipment already stored there.

While the Bush administration has stressed that it has no plans for any immediate military action against Baghdad, U.S. officials have warned they are holding open all options to force Iraq to comply with Gulf war ceasefire agreements.

It was the third exercise announced for Kuwait this week. The other two will begin next Monday and will involve an amphibious landing by up to 1,900 U.S. marines and the offloading of equipment from U.S. military cargo ships in the region.

Defence Department spokesman Pete Williams told Reuters that the timing of the army exercise, originally planned for September, was linked to the Iraq situation despite the settlement last Sunday of a dispute between Baghdad and the U.N. over the right of U.N. inspectors to search the Minister of Agriculture in Baghdad.

"We started planning this exercise last February. It was originally planned for September and when the trouble started with the inspectors, we decided to push it up a couple of weeks," Mr. Williams said.

"Even though the situation in Baghdad was resolved, we decided to go ahead anyway."

Mr. Williams said the exercise will be to test U.S. ability to send forces to Kuwait to link up with pre-positioned equipment, train on the equipment, put it back in storage and go home.

JORDAN TELEVISION	
Tel: 77311-19	
PROGRAMME TWO	
12:00	Olympics Live
12:30	Michael Vailant
13:00	La Chance Aux Chansons
13:30	News French
14:00	Magazine E-146
14:30	News in Hebrew
15:00	News in Arabic
15:30	Wings
16:00	Olympics
16:30	News in English
17:00	Olympics
PRAYER TIMES	
04:15	Fajr
07:45	Dhuhr (Sunrise) Dhuhr
12:42	Dhuhr
16:22	'Asr
19:20	Maghreb
21:06	Isha
CHURCHES	
St. Mary of Nazareth Church Sweithich Tel: 610740	
Assembly of God Church, Tel. 632765	
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590	
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440	
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757	
Terra Sancta Church Tel. 622466	
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 625541	
Anglican Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 628543	
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331	
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 772661	
Syrian Orthodox Church Tel. 771751	
Armenian International Church Tel. 683266	
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811295	
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 633264, 654931	
Church of the Nazarene Tel. 675691	
WEATHER	
Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology	
It will be fair and winds will be northwesterly moderate to fresh. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.	
Min./Max. temp.	
Amman 19 / 31	
Aqaba 25 / 39	
Deserts 15 / 32	
Jordan Valley 24 / 38	
Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 30, Aqaba 38, Humidity readings:	

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS	
NIGHT DUTY	
AMMAN:	
Dr. Rajab Bader	849262
Dr. Adil Dabbous	612177
Dr. Khalid M. Adil	743500
Dr. Muhammad Al Sawwa	732056
Farm pharmacy	661912
Perdous pharmacy	778236
Al Azzam pharmacy	671025
Nairoukh pharmacy	623672
Al Salam pharmacy	636730
Yacoub pharmacy	644945
Shmeisat pharmacy	637660
EMERGENCIES	
Food Control Centre	637111
Civil Defence Department	661111
Civil Defence Immediate	630841
Rescue	199
Civil Defence Emergency	672219
Rescue Police	192, 61111, 637777
Fire Brigade	891228
Blood Bank	775212
Highway Police	843402
Traffic Police	896390
Public Security Department	69023
Hotel Complaints	605800
Price Complaints	661176
Water and Sewerage	897467
Complaints	680100
Complaints	767111
Telephone Information (directory assistance)	121
Overseas Calls	010230
HOSPITALS	
AMMAN:	
Hussein Medical Centre	813813/32
Khalid Maternity, J. Amn.	64241/6
Khalid Maternity, J. Amn.	64241/2
Jabal Amman Maternity	636140
Malina, J. Amman	636140
Palestine, Shmeisat	664717/4
Shmeisat Hospital	669131
University Hospital	843845
Al-Musayib Hospital	672219
The Islamic, Amn.	661217/1
Al-Ahli, Amn.	664164/6
Al-Muhajir	77101/3
Al-Bashir, J. Amn.	77511/26
Amn, Marja	891611/15
Queen Aila Hospital	6724030
Amal Hospital	674155
ZARQA:	
Zarga Govt. Hospital	(09)983223
Zarga National Hospital	(09)900560
Ibn Sina Hospital	(09)786732
Al-Hilal Modern Hospital	(09)909090
IBRD:	
Princess Basma Hospital	(02)275555
Greek Catholic Hospital	(02)272275
Ibn Al-Nafis Hospital	(02)247100

Other Flights (Terminal 2)	
12:50	Muscat, Bahrain (GF)
14:00	Moscow (SU)
16:05	Larnaca (CY)
16:30	Beirut (ME)
20:35	Cairo (MS)
Other Flights (Terminal 2)	
16:00	Beirut, Rome (AZ)
16:40	Doha, Bahrain (GF)
16:50	Moscow (SU)
17:45	Larnaca (CY)
21:35	Cairo (MS)
MARKET PRICES	
Uppeflower price in \$/kg per kg	
Apple (red)	550 / 300
Banana	500 / 450
Banana (Mekong)	520 / 500
Banana	550 / 500
Cabbage	90 / 50
Carrot	240 / 200
Cauliflower	260 / 200
Cauliflower (large)	120 / 80
Cauliflower (small)	210 / 150
Eggplant	140 / 30
Garlic	550 / 450
Lemon	750 / 650



Camp activities open

AMMAN (Petra) — Acting Minister of Youth Samir Kassar Saturday opened week-long camp activities in Ajloun for Jordanian youths living abroad. He delivered a speech on behalf of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent.

The participants will be involved in seminars and visits around the country and meetings with officials and tours to archaeological sites.

IAS conference to study environment, development in the Islamic World

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Islamic Academy of Sciences (IAS) will organise its sixth international conference in Kuala Lumpur between August 10 and 14 entitled "The Environment and Development in the Islamic World".

A spokesman for the Amman-based IAS said that participants include 150 scholars and researchers representing 30 nations and international organisations. Twenty papers will be presented by scholars from the academy by participants involved in development and the environment, particularly in the Third World.

The spokesman said that the IAS meeting will review resolutions passed by the Earth Summit in Rio De Janeiro and their impact on the "Third World". Such issues to be discussed are desertification, marine pollution, radiation, forestry, modern technology transfer to the poor countries, environmental changes and socio-economic developments, and regional and international cooperation in environment-related affairs.

The fifth IAS conference was organised in Amman last December 1991 under the theme "Science and Technology Manpower, Development in the Islamic World".

The IAS is an independent non-political, non-governmental and non-profit organisation of scientists and technologists dedicated to promoting science and technology in the Islamic World.

The establishment of the IAS was recommended by the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC).

According to the statutes the academy, aims at serving as a consultative organisation of the "Islamic ummah" and institutions in the field of science and technology, initiating science and technology programmes and formulating standards of scientific performance, promoting research on major problems facing Islamic countries and identifying future technologies of relevance for possible adoption and utilisation.

Health education workshop opens

AMMAN (J.T.) — A six-day workshop titled "Evaluation Workshop for the Health Education Project" that has been in progress at government schools for the past two years opened in Amman Saturday with the participation of 200 officials representing the Ministry of Education and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

UNICEF representative at the meeting, Hind Al Khatib, was quoted by the Jordan News Agency, Petra as saying that the project was part of the general efforts to enable Jordan meet the target of achieving health for all by the year 2000.

Ms. Khatib said that teachers' views on the project and the problems encountered in its implementation, as well as proposals for solutions, will be reviewed at the meeting.

She said that a group of those teachers involved in implementing the project in schools are also involved in the workshop. Petra said 170 supervisors and 8,500 teachers at government schools have been trained for the project which started in 1989.

Addressing the opening session, Ministry of Education secretary general Munther Al Masri said that the evaluation was required to ensure that the project was following its sound track.

The Ministry of Education has published guidebooks for teachers of the first primary classes to be followed at schools and thus UNICEF has financed the project.

Several workshops and meetings by teachers involved in the implementation of this vital project were held for the training of teachers and their supervisors, Dr. Masri noted. He expressed hope that the workshop would come up with recommendations that would contribute towards the formation of a national health education strategy.

Jordanian-Lebanese preparatory committee agrees to fully exempt commodity custom duties

AMMAN (Petra) — The preparatory committee for the meetings of the Jordanian-Lebanese joint committee agreed on the article to be included in the agenda of the joint committee's meetings.

Secretary general of the Ministry of Industry and Trade Marwan Awad, who headed the Jordanian side to the preparatory committee's meetings said the committee agreed to fully exempt exchanged commodities between the two countries from customs duties, to coordinate agriculture programmes in the two countries, to revise commodity lists that will be approved between both countries and to enhance industrial cooperation.

Mr. Awad said the four-day meetings, held in Beirut recently, discussed the main aspects of economic and technical cooperation which will be discussed thoroughly in future sessions.

The two sides also agreed to holding fairs in each other's capital, even if fairs are designed only to display items or are for selling directly to the public, Mr. Awad said.

He added that the Jordanian delegation, which included representatives of the Ministry of Industry and Trade, the Customs Department and the Agricultural Marketing Organisation, held meetings with the Beirut Chamber of Commerce and the Lebanese industrialists society. The delegation exchanged with Lebanese officials views on ways to facilitate trade and industrial exchange between Jordan and Lebanon, he said.

The joint committee is expected to meet within two weeks. The meeting will be chaired on the Jordanian side by the Minister of Industry and Trade and on the Lebanese side by the Minister of Economy.

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

Sharif Zeid addresses new diplomats

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker Saturday voiced the government's determination to promote the democratic process in Jordan. He was speaking during a visit to the Foreign Ministry where he met with Foreign Minister Kamel Abu Jaber and the participants in a training course for new diplomats working for the ministry. In reviewing a number of current issues facing the Kingdom, the prime minister called on the new diplomats to develop their potentials and promote their efforts towards attaining a higher professional performance, enabling them to better represent their country abroad. The foreign minister earlier briefed Sharif Zeid on the task of the Jordanian embassies abroad, stressing the need for stimulating the role of the Foreign Ministry

Jordan marks Queen Zein's birthday

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan Sunday marks the birthday of Her Majesty Queen Zein Al Sharaf, the Queen Mother. On this happy occasion, the citizens of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan extend their warmest wishes and congratulations to Her Majesty and proudly remember her untiring devotion and sacrifice to the Kingdom and its people.

Her Majesty has embodied the greatest sense of motherhood by selflessly devoting her entire life to her eldest son His Majesty King Hussein, her sons Their Royal Highness Prince Mohammed and Crown Prince Hassan and her daughter Her Royal Highness Princess Basma.

The Queen Mother has also contributed to the strong women movement in Jordan, leading the way as a staunch defender of women's rights.

The Queen Mother contributes effectively to social and humanitarian services and gives particular attention to charitable organisations and voluntary institutions.



She was president of the first women society in Jordan in 1944 and since then she has spared no efforts providing support for all voluntary and humanitarian causes in the country.

Much of the Queen Mother's attention has been directed towards an orphanage in Amman named after her, providing it with financial assistance and support.

New bank notes circulated

AMMAN (AP) — In an effort to combat counterfeit money, Jordan on Saturday circulated new banknotes. The new notes will be used alongside the existing, 12-year-old designs while those are gradually withdrawn. The Central Bank distributed bills worth 20, 1 and 1/2 Jordanian dinars and said the 10 and 5-dinar notes would be circulated next month. The new bills have the same value of the old ones. The government said the new bank notes, which are smaller, more colourful and contain an interwoven silver thread, will be difficult to counterfeit. Jordan has repeatedly accused Israel of circulating forged Jordanian money to undermine the local economy. The new bills feature drawings of His Majesty King Hussein, wearing a kaffiyeh, on one side and Jordanian antiquities on the other. The 20-dinar bill depicts the Dome of the Rock, Islam's second holiest shrine, in Israeli occupied Jerusalem. That drawing was also on the old 1-dinar bill.

5-year, 300,000 dunum tree plan to begin soon

AMMAN (Petra) — A five-year project to plant 300,000 dunums of state owned land with forest and fruit trees will begin in the next few days.

The announcement was made by Agricultural Engineer Azzam Muhsien, director of the Forestry Department at the Ministry of Agriculture and director of the National Afforestation Project.

The project's goals are to increase the area of land covered by trees with the help of the private and the public sectors and to foster the sense of national belonging among the Jordanians by their participation in this vital project, said Mr. Muhsien.

He said the project is bound to create recreational facilities, contribute to ensuring food security, help stem desertification and protect them against soil erosion.

Mr. Muhsien said that all public and private sectors, along with the Jordanian armed forces, shoulder the responsibility for this project sponsored by the Ministry of Agriculture. The ministry is providing the trees, advice and guidance.

Any organisation or society can become involved in planting trees on any part of the state-owned land and can later organise trips, recreational activities and later have the forest area named after it, noted Mr. Muhsien. Other activities will need prior approval by the Ministry of Agriculture, he added.

Mr. Muhsien said that organisations taking part in the project should abide by the tree planting deadline and weed, prune and water the trees. According to the executive director of the project, Jaber Al Azrai, about 30 organisations have already expressed interest to participate.

Jordan holds Arbor Day celebrations every January when students, armed forces personnel, the public and various organisations plant trees across wide areas of the country.

Amman meeting urges Arab support for intifada

AMMAN (Petra) — A general meeting of Arab states hosting Palestinian refugees ended in Amman Saturday with a statement listing recommendations designed to confront Israel's plans and to help unify the Arab countries with regard to protecting Arab interests and ending the sufferings of Palestinians in the occupied Arab territories.

Adel Irshid, director of the Foreign Ministry's Palestinians Affairs Department, presided over the six-day meeting attended by representatives of Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, Palestine, the Arab League and the Arab League Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation.

The statement urged the Arab World to support the intifada and back the steadfastness of the Palestinian people and the Palestinian, Syrian, Lebanese and Jordanian negotiators of the Middle East peace conference.

Speakers at the conference called for international pressure on Israel to implement U.N. Security Council resolutions on the Arab-Israeli conflict.

According to the statement issued Saturday, discussions covered Israeli repression and intimidation of Palestinians, Israel's plans to Judaize Jerusalem, the economic and social conditions of Palestinians under Israeli rule and the Israeli settlement programmes in Palestine.

Delegates to the 48th conference visited the King Hussein Bridge across the Jordan River and witnessed the thousands of women and children waiting to cross to the occupied territories. They were briefed by local officials on the situation and Israel's delay in allowing travellers to cross.

The statement noted that the delegates discussed the question of returning the headquarters of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) from its current headquarters in Vienna to Beirut and reviewed an Arab report on education for Palestinian children.

Lower house to discuss corruption, mismanagement

AMMAN (Petra) — The Lower House of Parliament has scheduled a session Monday afternoon to discuss a report by a special parliamentary committee investigating corruption cases. The report will also cover opening of offices by deputies in various constituencies and governorates.

The Lower House is holding a session Sunday evening to be attended by the Cabinet to discuss an assessment by the House's financial committee on the audit bureau's 1989-1989 and 1990.

According to the financial committee, there is a general weakness in the financial management of certain public administrations. The committee called on the government to introduce a reform programme to properly train workers in this area.

The committee also said that there was a general weakness in the internal control systems of warehouses and a lack of organisation in their registers. It said public offices also suffer from negligence of officials, particularly in finances and protecting public funds. There is also negligence on the maintenance of government owned vehicles.

The committee complained of the failure of some public offices to follow the advice of the audit bureau and of the various systems followed by government stores.

In addition, the committee's report lists a number of violations of the Ministry of Finance and its departments regulations.

Engineers and authorities to discuss water resources

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST) will open a training seminar Sunday on water resources and the environment in Jordan to discuss environmental pollution question.

A university spokesman said that the four-day meeting aims at familiarising participants with the importance of Jordan's water resources and matters related to the design of earth and other dams of various sizes and capacities. The participants will also familiarise themselves with water shortages, managing of water resources, the future of the dams in Jordan and other related topics.

He said that the distribution of water in Jordan and pollution are also on the agenda.

Forty engineers from the Jordan Armed Forces, the Public Security Department, various ministries and government departments are to participate in the meeting.

The JUST conference comes close on the heels of a regional meeting held in Amman in the past week aimed at coordinating programmes by regional and Arab organisations in water-related fields.

The three-day meeting, organised by the U.N. Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) issued a set of recommendations last Thursday urging authorities to focus on ways to deal with the impending water crisis in the region and called for updating and revising earlier studies by groups or nations in the Western Asia region in order to reach a general plan that would help the authorities deal with the water crisis.

Participants representing the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) and ESCWA, along with other water research centres, said that their organisations should hold regular meetings to discuss the water situation in the region at least once a year.

They recommended the formation of a consultancy commission of Arab and international organisations to update water studies and conduct an assessment of water resources in the Arab world.

The meeting, which was held at the ESCWA headquarters in Amman, discussed a paper on stimulating programmes in water-related fields. It underlined the importance of maintaining a strong level of coordination and cooperation among the various regional organisations and states through ESCWA, and underlined the need for updating the Arab Water atlas.

The participants called for a meeting to be held by Arab ministers of water, irrigation and agriculture and regional organisations

Stranglehold on Aqaba shipping is tightened

By Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The enforcers of the international sanctions against Iraq have tightened their stranglehold on shipping in the Red Sea after a short respite, shipping agents reported Saturday.

"They are now adhering to the letter of the guidelines related to the inspection of vessels sailing into Aqaba, leading to unnecessary delays and losses for importers," said a spokesman for the Jordan Shipping Agents Association (JSAA).

Under the "new" procedures adopted by the warships patrolling the Red Sea, any vessel to carry "suspect" cargo could be categorically denied entry or face a delay of three days during which shipment details are verified.

All details related to cargo, including the street address and telephone number of the importer as given in the ship's manifest, are routed for verification through the Bahrain headquarters of the American-led international enforcers of the embargo against Iraq.

The concerned importer in Amman is contacted directly from Bahrain or through the embassies of the anti-Iraq coalition. "The cargo could be rejected for entry to Aqaba at the slightest trace of doubt, and this could include a printing mistake of the telephone number of the importer or if, for some reason, the concerned person is not available to answer questions," said the JSAA spokesman.

Earlier, the "verification" process was done directly between the concerned diplomatic missions in Amman and the naval fleet in the Red Sea.

American officials say that

hundreds of "front" companies are operating out of Amman with Iraqi government funds and import goods for the Iraqi market. According to these officials, the companies deal in foodstuffs and medicine — which are exempt from the sanctions — as well as "crucial" items in violation of the embargo to help the continued reign in power of the government of President Saddam Hussein.

However, very little information is released by the officials on what they consider "crucial." Several names of companies and individuals were given in a recent international agency report, but Jordan Times inquiries found that almost all of them were no longer operative. Some of them were found to have closed down two years ago.

Jordanian officials, including Finance Minister Basel Jaradat, do not deny that Iraqi businessmen have set up business in partnership with Jordanians and ask whether there is any international law against allowing foreigners to operate legitimate joint ventures with Jordanians in Jordanian territory.

The fresh tightening of the sanctions enforcement in the Red Sea appeared to have come after Jordan rejected an American proposal to station "international" inspectors in the Kingdom to monitor cargo traffic.

Several ships were detained at the Tiran Straits at the mouth of the Gulf of Aqaba last month and were allowed to proceed after an average of three days, the spokesman told the Jordan Times. He said all the vessels were carrying foodstuffs such as rice, sugar, ghee etc. and provided the names of the ships and dates when they were "intercepted."

The enforcers of the Iraq sanc-

tions "make no distinction among importers or consider that the cargo is destined for the Jordanian market," he added, pointing out that all the vessels being harassed were carrying goods exclusively meant for Jordan.

The new "procedures" have done away with what had appeared to be a breakthrough four months ago in resolving problems faced by Jordanian shipping agents and importers since the imposition of the sanctions against Iraq in August 1990.

Importers had reported that things were getting better since April this year if only because all parties concerned — shippers, importers, shipping agents and banks — were taking pains to ensure that every requirement of the sanction enforcers was fulfilled.

The JSAA Saturday issued a statement calling on all importers, shippers, banks and shipping agents to ensure that the full street address, including the name of the building, and telephone, telex and facsimile numbers as well as an "emergency" telephone number are given in all shipping documents.

It also urged that fully-chartered ships meet the enforcers' requirement of "cargo accessibility" — meaning enough room for inspectors to enter hatches. Meeting this condition means deprivation of one-fourth of the cargo space, and, in turn, paying full charter price for three-fourth capacity.

"Adherence to these conditions is indeed damaging to the national economy as well as the importers," said the JSAA spokesman. "But we have no choice: Isn't it better to ensure that vessels are allowed into Aqaba at an extra cost rather than no ships at all?"

Swiss envoy: Bern willing to host peace talks, send observers if elections in occupied lands

AMMAN (J.T.) — Celebrating Switzerland's national day, the Swiss ambassador to Jordan, Dino Sciolli, expressed deep satisfaction with the existing ties between his country and Jordan, noting the joint committee that meets biennially that aims at bolstering bilateral cooperation in economic, scientific, trade and cultural fields.

Mr. Sciolli said in a statement to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, Saturday that his country appreciates the role of His Majesty King Hussein and his efforts to help strengthen friendly relations between Swiss and Jordanians.

Switzerland takes pride in the distinguished medal presented by King Hussein to the family of the late Johann Ludwig Burckhardt, the Swiss traveller who discovered the ancient Nabatean city of Petra in 1812, said the ambassador.

Referring to the Middle East, the ambassador expressed his country's readiness to contribute in any way towards giving momentum to the peace process,

noting that Bern was closely following up the peace negotiations.

Switzerland is ready to participate in the process by sending observers to the region should there be elections in the occupied territories, added Mr. Sciolli. He said that Switzerland is deeply satisfied with the U.N. secretary general's decision to choose Switzerland's ambassador to Washington to liaise between the various parties in the peace process. He added that he is willing to host the peace negotiations.

Mr. Sciolli stressed the need for Palestinians to regain their right of self-determination and to return to their land, adding that Switzerland has often urged all parties to remain committed to the Fourth Geneva Conventions and to respect human rights.

Mr. Sciolli said that Jordanian-Swiss cooperation led to the establishment of the phonetics centre at the University of Jordan in 1988. It is the first specialised centre of its kind in the Middle East and in the coming two years

is scheduled to graduate 200 students, he said.

The ambassador, added that Swiss archaeological missions continue work in Jordan in cooperation with the Department of Antiquities in Petra and Madaba and preparations are underway for organising a Jordanian exhibit in Switzerland in 1993 aimed at introducing the public to Jordan's archaeological and tourist treasures.

Switzerland was among the first countries to come to the help of Jordan in the wake of the Gulf crisis, which severely set back the Jordanian economy, noted Mr. Sciolli.

He said that Bern offered Jordan a 114 million Swiss Francs to support the national economy, promote Jordanian exports and stimulate the on-going scientific research programmes at the Royal Scientific Society (RSS), in addition to dispatching students from Jordan to study at Swiss universities particularly in hotel management and farming.

Syrian official ends 7-day tour of Jordan's natural reserves, projects

AMMAN (Petra) — The director of the badia, pastures and sheep department at the Syrian ministry of agriculture, Abdul Khaleq Assad, left Amman for Damascus Saturday, ending a week-long visit to Jordan.

Mr. Assad held talks with Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN) President Anis Al Marashdeh and RSCN Director General Maher Abu Jaafar on how to enhance coop-

eration between the society and the Syrian ministry of agriculture and the prospect of establishing joint ventures between them in the future.

Mr. Assad, who was in Jordan at an invitation from the RSCN, visited the society's natural reserves in Wadi Al Mujib, Dana, Zabia and Al Shomari, and was familiarised with the modern techniques adopted in running these reserves. He was also acquainted with their projects and objectives that aim to develop the area supplying them with skilled teams to train people of traditional and non-traditional professions since conserving nature and developing the local community are related.

The Syrian official was accompanied on the visits by Mr. Abu Jaafar and several of the society's officials who briefed him on the goals of the reserves.

Mr. Assad said in a statement to the press before departure that his visit to Jordan comes within the framework of brotherly relations between Jordan and Syria and that it aims to bolster existing cooperation between the two countries.

"It was a good opportunity and I had the chance to be familiarised with Jordan's achievements in the field of establishing natural reserves and methods followed in protecting wild animals and breeding extinct creatures in their original habitat at the reserves," he said.

He said that Syria had commenced work on founding Al Tuleila reserve in the Syrian desert. He added that Syria is trying to utilise Jordan's expertise, which he described as pioneering in this field at the level of the whole region.

WHAT'S GOING ON

Exhibitions

- ★ Exhibition entitled "Exploring Science" at the British Council.
- ★ Ceramic sculpture exhibition entitled "Remains of Kaghon" by Iraqi artist Haim Mahdi at Baladna Art Gallery.

LECTURE

- ★ Lecture, in Arabic, entitled "The Image of Women in Arabic Films" by Palestinian director Hanna Elias, to be followed by a show of film by Mr. Elias entitled "The Mountains" at the Scientific and Cultural Centre of Abdul Hameed Shouman Foundation — 6 p.m.

ADVERTISEMENT

Baghdad International School will open for registration between August 26-31.

Fees are:
Application ID 500
Registration ID 300
Tuition: \$900 (KG-G.12)
ID 1500 - 2900 (KG-GR.12)
H. Al-Soudi
Director

By Dr. Fahd Al Fanek

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation. Established 1975.

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Facsimile: 661242

The Jordan Times is published daily except Fridays.
Subscription and advertising rates are available from the
Jordan Times advertising department.

Sunday's Economic Pulse

Public sector sellout — false notion

A number of politically-motivated writers in the popular press, intentionally use ready-made, worn-out expressions that are overloaded with sensations in order to lure public opinion such as selling out the public sector or the liquidation of the public sector. It is a hollow slogan that misrepresents the situation. As a matter of fact no one in his right mind ever called for the sell out of the public sector, not even Thatcher or Reagan. The public sector exists in the most advanced capitalist countries such as the United States and Great Britain, where the public sectors are worth billions, if not trillions of dollars and sterling pounds. What is called for in the case of Jordan is the privatisation of certain activities of productive and commercial nature. The purpose is to achieve higher degree of economic efficiency, and secure more capital resources to the state, to be used in financing new investments, especially the infrastructure that the private sector is not willing to finance.

Two examples stand out as candidates for privatisation in Jordan. They are the Public Transport Corporation (PTC), which runs a bus service in Amman area, and the Royal Jordanian (RJ), better known as Alia. The two activities are obviously not compatible with the state management style. As such, they are condemned to continued losses and inefficiency as long as they are run by employees, civil servants and retired officers instead of entrepreneurs and businessmen.

Now that the circumstances had changed completely, and both the airline and the bus service can be operated by the private sector on purely commercial basis to provide better services, make money instead of losses and become an asset and supporter of the national economy and the treasury, instead of being a liability and a burden on both of them, we should not call that selling out or liquidation of the public sector. It would only be that things are taken back to normal and we would be getting rid of an exceptional state of affairs which were pushed into under tough circumstances that are no more existing.

Chance for Ghali

THE CAMPAIGN against U.N. Secretary General Boutros Ghali has picked up steam lately with renewed efforts to squeeze him out of office. In fact there are now persistent reports that Dr. Ghali may offer his resignation by the end of this year due to serious problems he is facing within and outside the international organisation. The latest round of criticism being levelled against him surfaced over the way the Yugoslav conflict has been handled, specifically speaking over the fighting in Bosnia and the ways and means available for the U.N. to stop the fighting there. Britain has been spearheading policies within the U.N. Security Council on that situation without bothering to consult or synchronise with the head of the U.N. system. Dr. Ghali has been feeling increasingly isolated or bypassed by the council and its Western members over international conflicts. His insistence on exercising his prerogatives as the chief executive of the U.N. have been ridiculed and described by his opponents as petty and contrary to the spirit of team work on which the international organisation conducts its functions. His proposal to establish a standing international force capable of timely and effective interventions has been crudely rejected out of hand by the big five powers in the council. Likewise his appeal to accord the deteriorating situation in Somalia more attention has won recognition only belatedly and after much protestations. This has led Dr. Ghali to view the permanent members of the council as more concerned with the conflicts and the bloodsheds of the North at the expense of the South. The continuing differences in perspectives between the Western powers in the U.N. and Dr. Ghali have put them at loggerheads over many other issues, including human rights and environmental concerns. Being a son of the developing world, Dr. Ghali continues to view conflicts in the world from the point of view of the poorer countries. This North-South confrontation between him and certain Western capitals found major expression over the situation in Libya when Washington and Britain threatened to blow Tripoli and its leadership to smithereens because Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi refused to surrender two of his nationals to the U.S. or Britain for trial. London and Washington have never forgiven Dr. Ghali for the way he exercised his weight over that crisis and as such helped frustrate the scheme against Libya. Many knowledgeable people attribute the present crisis between the U.N. secretary general and London in particular to that particular case and the way it was handled by Dr. Ghali. This is the time therefore for the Arab countries, especially from the Gulf region, to show more solidarity with the first Arab ever to head the international organisation. Undermining Dr. Ghali is tantamount to undermining the entire Arab World. The repeated campaigns of sneers against the Egyptian head of the international organisation need to stop, and the effective way to accomplish that objective is to make the Arab voice clearer and louder on that score. After all Dr. Ghali has been in office little more than half a year and he deserves more time to prove himself as an effective leader of the world body.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

IN LIGHT of the wave of violence and the atrocities committed by the Israeli troops in the Gaza Strip and Jabalia camp Friday one cannot expect the Palestinians to give up the struggle and the intifada and offer the olive branch to the Israeli troops, said Al Ra'i Arabic daily Saturday. The paper said that the more violent the Israeli forces are, the more resistant will the Palestinians be. They are determined to regain their rights and end the occupation. The atrocities committed by the troops in Gaza provide evidence of the criminal nature of the present government and raise doubt about its declared policies of striving to reach peace with the Arabs, said the daily. The Israeli leadership should take positive initiatives and declare its willingness to withdraw the Israeli forces from the occupied lands, implement U.N. Security Council resolutions 242 and 338, release Sheikh Ahmad Yassin, the Palestinian popular leader, set free all Palestinian detainees and prevent its troops from entering the Arab areas to avoid violence, called the paper. It said that only through this positive stand and constructive attitude can the Palestinians and the Arabs believe that the Rabin government is genuinely oriented towards peace based on justice. The Israeli leadership, said the daily, realise that atrocities and continued criminal actions in the occupied territories can only inflame the intifada and make the Palestinians more determined than ever to pursue the struggle through every available means in order to end the occupation.

A COLUMNIST in Al Ra'i Arabic daily heaped praise on the Health Minister Aref Al Bataineh for removing all restrictions in the way of pharmacists wishing to open drug stores anywhere in Jordan, saying that the move was very constructive and should have been taken a long time ago. Fahd Al Fanek said that by taking this step the health minister aims at allowing unemployed pharmacists to find jobs and has broken the monopoly of the old pharmacies over the local market. By opening as many drug stores as possible, the minister is encouraging free enterprise in the local market and allowing pharmacists the chance to earn a living in the cities as well as in the rural areas and villages, said the writer. At the same time, the writer criticised the Jordan Pharmacists Association for protesting against the move, noting that the long-serving pharmacists who had monopolised the market for so long should make way for others and they should, themselves, move to the remote and rural regions instead of calling on the new pharmacists to do so. He also criticised the association's threat to stage a general strike in a show of protest against the minister's decision as this would be a crime against the public in general and the sick in particular. The writer urged the minister of health to withdraw the licence of any drugstores whose proprietors threaten to stage a strike because a strike, he said, means endangering public life.

'Perhaps one of the fundamentals of U.S.-Israel relationship is a closet full of skeletons'

By Jane Hunter

Following is the last of the three-part article on U.S. and Israeli covert operations in the Third World. The second part of the article, reprinted from The Link, published by Americans for Middle East Understanding, Inc., appeared in the Aug. 1 issue of the Jordan Times.

Africa

Africa was a prime theatre for U.S.-Israeli "strategic cooperation." Sometimes the partners pursued objectives related to the cold war — such as their support of the "kleptocratic" dictator of Zaire, Mobutu Sese Seko and the United guerrillas fighting the Soviet-supported government of Angola. But often the objectives were obscure petty power games, such as the Mossad effort to invade the West African nation of Ghana and the joint effort to overthrow Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi, described below.

Whatever the "justification," the covert operations in Africa caused enormous damage. The U.S. mines used against Angola made that nation a world leader in amputees. Mobutu drained Zaire's considerable wealth away. And, while they never succeeded in bringing war to Ghana and Libya, the two operations, described below were an assault on the U.S. democratic system.

In both cases the government "of the people" violated the people's law and hid its law-breaking from those charged with judging its performance — the voters.

In 1986, a Mossad front company in New York, Bophuthatwana International (an accurate reflection of its roots in Israel's extensive relationship with South Africa), launched an operation that, had it succeeded, would have involved an armed invasion of the west African nation of Ghana, a clear violation of the Neutrality Act.

However, the invaders — recruits with a history of working in CIA operations — balked when they suspected that the operation was not, as they had been told, under the auspices of the CIA. The mercenaries manifested as the Nobistor, the ship they had outfitted in Argentina, Brazil. Some wound up in Brazilian prison cells.

Godfrey Osei, the Ghanaian who was to lead the invasion, had raised some of the funds from a "Chinese mafia" in New York in exchange for promises of cash no privileges.

Colombia, Panama

The Reagan administration's determination to wage war against "communism" in Central America quickly ran up against opposition from citizens and Congress who saw the administration's "freedom fighters" and "democrats" in Nicaragua, Honduras and Guatemala as the thugs and death squads which they really were.

So the administration called on its "strategic" partner Israel to help the CIA prosecute a war whose consequences continue to haunt the Western hemisphere. Israel had already been supporting the brutal, U.S.-supported governments of Guatemala and El Salvador against persistent insurgencies. But in 1982, working with the CIA from its base in Panama, where a senior Israeli intelligence officer had a privileged relationship with strongman Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega, Israel called in a third ally: the Colombian Medellin cocaine cartel.

The purported aim was to support the Contras — a mercenary band of officers who served former Nicaraguan dictator Anastasio Somoza and Nicaraguan peasants, all assembled by the CIA. While it is unclear how much the cocaine barons helped in the ousting of Nicaragua's Sandinista government — the primary goal of the CIA-Israel operation — the three-way relationship facilitated the flow of cocaine into the U.S.

The Israeli-Panamanian connection contributed to the events which culminated in the Bush administration's questionable and destructive invasion of Panama in 1989. And Israeli covert operations subsequently trained and armed Medellin paramilitaries who inflicted terrible violence on Colombia.

Although some of these activities made the headlines, neither the administration nor the Congress took steps to strengthen the fabric of our democratic system by calling Israel to account for the direction its war on our behalf against "communism" ultimately took.

Although he is probably not a major Israeli operative on the order of mega-arms dealer Shaul Eisenberg (David Kimche's current employer), Bruce Rappaport winds like a thread through one of Israel's most sensational operations — its use of the Caribbean nation of Antigua and Barbuda as a front for an arms sale to the Medellin cocaine cartel.

Mr. Rappaport got to Antigua first. He owned the land on which Maurice Sarfat, a former Israeli military officer, set up his melon farms. And one of Mr. Rappaport's banks in Antigua made a large loan to Mr. Sarfat — which was never repaid. Mr. Sarfat (who also walked away from a loan guaranteed by OPIC, the U.S. government insurance agency) took it from there, first cultivating government officials and then providing entrée to their office to his compatriot Yair Klein.

Mr. Klein's work in Colombia, where his Israeli-licensed "security" company, Spearhead Ltd., trained the hit squads of the Medellin cocaine cartel in assassination and bombing techniques, was beginning to attract unwelcome attention.

lay much of the blame for the 1989 assassination of a leading presidential candidate, a series of massacres, and the bombings of a passenger aircraft and the headquarters of the domestic intelligence agency on Spearhead's tutelage.

In 1988, Mr. Klein was in Antigua, looking for a new way to provide arms to his Medellin client, José Gonzalo Rodríguez Gacha.

Meanwhile, as draconian laws aimed at combating domestic drug trafficking eroded constitutional guarantees, the U.S. government was providing a hospital base in Miami to Israeli Brig. General (Res) Pinchas Shachar. Gen. Shachar, according to a British television report, was a Mossad agent and an "undercover representative" of the state-owned Israeli Military Industries (IMI). He was part of a network of Israeli arms dealers in Miami that had been selling Israeli weapons to Latin America since 1982.

In 1988, Mr. Shachar, Mr. Klein and Mr. Sarfat convinced Antiguan officials to provide a false front to ship \$381,500 worth of rifles and ammunition to Medellin boss Rodríguez Gacha. Gen. Shachar placed the order with IMI. His name, Mr. Klein's and Mr. Sarfat's would all appear on the paperwork for the sale and, when the operation was exposed, Mr. Shachar would quickly depart for Israel.

In March 1989, Israel dispatched the Medellin's guns on a ship, escorted by Captain Philip Eason, subsequently the deputy mayor of Eilat. The arms would be discovered in January 1990, buried on a farm belonging to Mr. Gacha's son, with papers and serial numbers clearly identifying Israel as the source.

Already fending off charges that it had sanctioned, or assigned, the Spearhead training team to Colombia, Israel insisted that Antigua had ordered the weapons fair and square.

Although, after intense international pressure, it put Mr. Klein on trial and handed him a token conviction, Israel insists to this day that its security masters were training Colombian ranchers.

Mr. Klein, depending which story you believe, was paid in cocaine delivered to him in Israel or in narco-dollars delivered in the U.S. and subsequently transported to Israel by a network of Orthodox Jews specialising in laundering.

Meanwhile, under the guise of the domestic "war on drugs," authorities have begun seizing property "suspected" of being connected with drug trafficking without due process.

U.S. citizens caught with cocaine for personal use are charged with felonies. Drug dealing began exacting a fearful toll from the already deprived inner cities, where it was one of the few good jobs available to youth.

By opposing gun control laws, the Reagan and Bush administrations made sure the young dealers had access to the same automatic weapons they marketed so freely abroad. And the very government that promulgated the get-tough-on-drugs laws appears to have helped supply the local market.

Washington's tolerance — if it is only that — for Israel's mingling of military contracting and narco-trafficking goes back to 1982, to the early days of strategic cooperation, when Mike Harari, an Israeli intelligence officer who served as a close aide to Panamanian strongman Gen. Manuel Noriega, ran a contra support network that combined the resources of Mossad, the CIA and the Medellin cartel.

A senior source at the Israeli Defence Ministry's export sales office (SIBAT) told an Israeli newspaper that "interests related to the drug cartel" financed \$40 million worth of weapons Israel arms dealers sold to the Contras. Both the Israeli and U.S. governments were "well aware" of the sales and the Israeli Defence Ministry had "tacitly authorised them," said the paper.

Hoping for good will from the Contras' patrons in Washington, the cartels were also making direct contributions to guerrilla leaders. Some contended they had protection for their deliveries to the U.S.

When the Bush administration invaded Panama in December 1989, Mr. Harari was allowed to slip away to Israel. Gen. Noriega had planned to use his cooperation with the Harari network as part of his defence when he stood trial on drug-trafficking charges in a federal court in Miami.

But conveniently for Israel and the Bush administration, the judge did not allow the defence to introduce "political" arguments. Mr. Noriega was convicted in April 1992.

What of the future?

The Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) Israel signed with the Reagan administration in 1988 was designed to institutionalise the privileged "strategic" relationship beyond the reach of an unfriendly successor administration. But in March 1992, with the Soviet Union dead less than half a year, the MOA's permanence was put to the test.

Someone in the administration with a great deal of information told the Wall Street Journal about a report that Sherman Funk, the State Department's inspector general, was preparing that would detail Israel's unauthorised receipt of weapons containing U.S. technology to third countries to which the sale of U.S. arms was embargoed by law. And the Washington Times reported that Israel had transferred technology for the Patriot missile to China.

The news — and Israel's rejoinder that the leaks were a "slander" and a "smear campaign" designed to weaken Israel's position — had all the makings of a full-blown crisis in relations. Yet, in April, when a U.S. inspection team returned from Israel saying it could find no evidence of a Patriot transfer, the State Department declared the matter closed, ignoring reports that two Chinese officials — stationed in Syria and the Netherlands — had confirmed the transfer to U.S. diplomats.

And when a heavily censored version of the inspector general's report was issued singling out Israel for "a systematic and growing pattern of unauthorised transfers by the recipient dating back to about 1983," the State Department spokeswoman dismissed the blockbuster, saying there were "many differences of opinion" about the report in the State Department.

There was undoubtedly more than one reason for her discretion. The State Department would not want to risk alienating Israel, perhaps giving it an excuse to back out of the Middle East peace talks. The U.S. elections were approaching and the administration had already badly rolled Israel's supporters with its refusal to grant Israel \$10 billion in loan guarantees without an Israeli commitment to freeze construction of Jewish settlements in the occupied territories.

Yet despite these possible motives for backing away from a

(Continued on page 5)

LETTERS

Stretching aid

To the Editor:

In the report "Arab delegates convene session on refugees, UNRWA criticised for reducing education aid" (Jordan Times, July 29), the text of the report also refers to a criticism of "the agency for its reduction of health, educational and other services to the refugees..."

In this regard I would be very grateful if you could publish the following clarification:

Over the last few years UNRWA has been improving and expanding its services for Palestinian refugees. UNRWA's biggest programme, which is the education programme, may be cited as a good example of this.

Starting from this school year, the agency will be introducing the tenth class into its schools in Jordan adding one more year to the nine-years of schooling it has been providing to the refugee pupils. This will cost the agency an additional \$3 million for the first year to cover the costs of building additional facilities to accommodate some 14,000 boys and girls who will raise to 154,000 the number of pupils studying at its 197 schools in Jordan, and to cover the costs of hiring additional teachers to cater for the increase in the school population. This is in addition to the new school buildings UNRWA opened recently in Jordan to improve its educational facilities.

In 1992 for example, the agency opened new school buildings in Wadi Seer and in the town of Waqqas in the Jordan Valley. Right now a school is being constructed in Baqa'a camp and another one is about to be completed in Suf camp. It should also be noted that UNRWA has absorbed about seven thousand children of families returning from the Gulf.

UNRWA's health programme also witnessed similar improvements. In 1991 the agency opened two mother-and-child health centres in Wihdat camp and Jabal Nuzha in Amman in addition to a health point in Mashari' in the Jordan Valley.

In the aftermath of the Gulf crisis UNRWA's 20 health centres in Jordan have seen a remarkable increase estimated at 15-20 per cent in the number of daily average consultations.

In 1992 UNRWA allocated \$615,000 for its hospitalisation reimbursement scheme for the refugees in Jordan. However, due to the increase in the demand by the refugees, the amount was completely exhausted in the first half of the year. Therefore, the agency had to allocate an additional amount of \$511,000 for this scheme till the end of the year. In order to make sure that the additional amount would cover the remaining period of the year, the agency had no choice but to reduce the ceiling set for the reimbursement to enable a larger number of the refugees to benefit from this scheme, taking into consideration UNRWA's budgetary limitations.

The relief and social services programme, UNRWA's smallest programme, is no exception. Earlier this year a women's programme centre was opened in Aqaba which was the first agency installation opened in south Jordan. This programme is also being reoriented towards socio-economic development approach through UNRWA's new project for income-generation, which aims to promote self-reliance amongst the refugees rather than relying on direct relief assistance.

This is apart from UNRWA services in the other fields, especially in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip and Lebanon, where UNRWA has been providing emergency assistance to the Palestinians.

While I could never claim that UNRWA is able to meet all the needs of the refugee community, we have been able to gradually increase our services. Any further increases will be dependent on increased contributions from the donor community.

Dennis L. Brown,
Director of UNRWA Affairs, Jordan.

Good spirits should prevail

To the Editor:

I was puzzled when Jordan Television deliberately put on a commercial seconds before the Israeli athletic team was introduced at the opening ceremony of the Barcelona Olympic Games.

Israeli Television did not cut out the Jordanian athletes, let alone the Iraqis, next to who they were most likely standing due to the alphabetical order — as ironic as it may be.

I would not have questioned this action had it not been for the peace talks. We have actually been sitting with the Israelis at the same table in Madrid and Washington.

Why are we not able to watch them or mention their name on our television sets? I am curious to know the reason behind this. Is it politics? I understand emotions take over sometimes, but I also believe that sportsmanship and good spirits should prevail during such an international event as the summer Olympic games.

Gulfilz Sati,
P.O. Box 3629,
Amman.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

بازار الحلال

PLO protest

(Continued from page 1)

the organisation or calling for an alternative," Mr. Said said Saturday. "It is only a democratic expression of the need to put their house in order."

A member of the Palestinian delegation to the Arab-Israeli peace talks told the Jordan Times that while he accepted the democratic expression by the House "we will not accept the guardianship of anyone."

"The Palestinians should open their minds to all kinds of criticism from any Arab quarter because our problem has Arab and Palestinian considerations, but the final decision will be up to us," said the delegate, who asked for anonymity.

He said that the Palestinians had finally established a "healthy atmosphere of reaching a Palestinian decision based on Palestinian interests."

"For many decades we made the mistake of allowing the Palestinian decision to be dictated by a higher Arab decision. Now the situation has changed and what is happening now is healthy," he said.

He warned against Palestinian sensitivities towards any input by Arabs on the Palestinian issue "because we do not want to make the same mistake in reverse."

"All Arab forces, popular or otherwise, have the right to say what they think," he said.

The Palestinian statement from Tunis said the PNC "rejects such an interference from the Jordanian parliament in this Palestinian matter."

"If our brothers, whether in the Jordanian Parliament or any other Arab party, have an opinion to express... then their national and religious duty should dictate to them to express that opinion through the accepted channels and within the bilateral talks between the two brotherly delegations in the joint delegation," the statement said.

"We hope that every party remains at the level of responsibility needed at this dangerous stage in our Arab Nation and to work towards more Arab unity," it said.

The Lower House's statement accused the United States of trying to impose a political settlement in the region which could liquidate the Palestinian cause through introducing autonomy rule in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The statement said that political developments since the Madrid conference indicate that the U.S. administration is seeking to perpetuate Jewish settlements in the occupied Arab territories, deprive Palestinians of their national rights and dilute the Arab and Islamic identity and character of Jerusalem.

It added that U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's recent visit to the region was to peddle a plan to speed up the implementation of the American-imposed solution in order to split Arab ranks and make separate deals with each Arab party.

The House then expressed its absolute rejection of any solution that would liquidate the Palestinian problem and plans to make Jerusalem an international city "as a prelude to Judaizing the city."

It also called for the continuation of the Palestinian uprising and warned against "Zionist settlements" in the occupied Arab territories.

In his statement Saturday, the Palestinian ambassador said that the PLO "recognises the positive points which were mentioned in the House's statement, especially those which outline the Palestinian and Arab foundations of negotiations."

"But it wants to draw attention that the dropping of the PLO's name as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and not mentioning the establishment of a separate Palestinian state and the right of self-determination prompted the PLO to express its dissatisfaction," he said.

Rampage

(Continued from page 1)

units codenamed "cherry" and "Samson" for failing to enforce army regulations.

More than 30 Palestinians have been shot dead this year by the undercover soldiers who usually dress as Arabs to catch activists of the uprising.

The army's standing orders require soldiers to shoot at the legs of suspects unless their lives are in danger. Human rights organisations have accused the undercover forces of a "shoot-to-kill" policy against Palestinian activists.

The decision came weeks after undercover soldiers accidentally killed one of their own who they mistook for an armed Arab during an operation in the West Bank.

The sources said the defence establishment decided to monitor the undercover units more closely following the report. They gave no details.

U.S.-Israel relationship

(Continued from page 4)

confrontation with Israel, the State Department's primary concern may have been a parochial one.

Richard A. Clarke, the assistant secretary of state for politico-military affairs, was responsible for verifying Israel's use of restricted U.S. weapons technology. In his report, Inspector General Funk recommended that Mr. Clarke be disciplined for instructing U.S. embassy personnel in Israel not to conduct hands-on verifications but instead to accept Israel's assurances that it was not reexporting U.S. arms components.

Mr. Clarke had also failed to fulfill his legal responsibility to notify Congress about suspected Israeli violations, Mr. Funk noted. Mr. Clarke, however, also had

responsibilities under the 1988 MOA, which established the Joint Political Military Group (JPMG), a binational, inter-agency group co-chaired by the director-general of the Israeli Ministry of Defence and the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Politico-Military Affairs.

The JPMG, says Article III of the MOA, is the forum in which the two states discuss and implement, pursuant to existing arrangements, joint cooperative efforts such as combined planning, joint exercises and logistics. The JPMG also discusses current politico-military issues of mutual strategic concern.

In memoranda attached to the Inspector General's report, Undersecretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger rejected the recommendation that Mr. Clarke be disciplined and Mr. Clarke

protested hotly that "this administration inherited a situation of gross nonfeasance" from the Reagan administration.

He may well have been telling the truth. In the good old days a wink and a nod to such things as the sale of cluster bombs to Ethiopia and the transfer to South Africa of technology for the Arrow anti-missile missile, a Star Wars project, would be part and parcel of strategic cooperation.

In the post cold war world however, with the Pentagon sweeping up the crumbs it disdained during the Reagan build-up, every Israeli peccadillo was an assault on military industries facing massive cut-backs.

The resolution of the crisis followed the same lines. The inspector general's report noted that the department "has recently

taken steps to curtail further unauthorised transfers by the recipient. Licence applications to export U.S. components for a number of weapons systems have not been approved... (and) will not be approved until questions pertaining to the sale of the systems to other parties are resolved."

The report noted that "the recipient has not responded to the questions and, as a result, the licenses have not been approved."

And "diplomatic sources" told the Jerusalem Post that Mr. Clarke would be heading the U.S. team to the regularly scheduled bi-annual meeting of the U.S.-Israel JPMG at the Galei Kinneret Hotel in Tiberias, Israel.

With calm restored, Israel radio reported that "the prime minister (Shamir) said he has noted a U.S. effort to halt nega-

tive declarations against Israel and an effort to change the impression that the special U.S. commitment to Israel's security has been eroded."

President George Bush expressed the hope that the two governments could disagree from time to time "without placing fundamentals at risk."

Rich Bond, the chairman of the Republican National Committee, assured the annual convention of AIPAC, Israel's congressional lobby, of the "administration's continuing support for the fundamentals of the relationship."

And Israel's newly elected prime minister, Yitzhak Rabin, himself wasted no time in reaffirming the relationship. Perhaps one of the fundamentals of this relationship is a closet full of skeletons, real and political, left over from a decade of covert policymaking.

Bush gropes for winning strategy amid signs of panic

By Gene Gibbons
Renter

WASHINGTON — When things first started going sour for President George Bush a few months ago, a television comedian quipped that Vice President Dan Quayle was thinking of dropping him from the Republican ticket.

The line was so absurd it got a big laugh. But today, some disgruntled conservatives are making the same suggestion in dead earnest and the political disarray this reflects is no joke to Bush or the Republican Party.

Mr. Bush's reelection campaign seems to be dead in the water, crippled by a daily drumbeat of grim economic news, constantly worsening polls, one campaign gaffe after another and near-panic among supporters desperate to turn things around.

Thursday's developments were a stark example of why he is floundering 18 days before a Republican presidential convention that once shaped up as a political coronation.

The commerce Department said the feeble U.S. recovery from recession slowed sharply in the second quarter of 1992 because worried consumers cut their spending and the stimulus from foreign trade was lost.

"While the economy is still growing, it is not growing fast enough," Mr. Bush conceded during a campaign stop in Texas. He said Congress had to stop "dillying and dallying" and pass his growth programme.

The New York Times and CBS News reported that a misunderstanding may have triggered the recent U.S. showdown with Iraq over arms inspections, which exposed Mr. Bush to Democratic charges that Saddam Hussein was thumbing his nose at the United States.

Surging Democratic challenger Bill Clinton got heavy press coverage with confrontational politics right out of the Republican handbook, travelling to the site of the 1988 Republican convention to remind voters of Mr. Bush's promise at that affair that he would never raise taxes.

And a full-page advertisement in the Washington Post, run by a conservative Republican leader from the key state of Florida, urged Mr. Quayle to help Mr. Bush by leaving the Republican ticket. Mr. Bush and Mr. Quayle have been trying to quash such talk for weeks.

The advert appeared as Mr. Bush headed off on a two-day campaign trip to Texas and California, two "must-win" states that account for about one-third

of the 270 electoral votes needed to win the presidency in the indirect U.S. system.

On top of all this, a smattering of "dump Bush" talk has begun among right-wing Republicans who helped fan the so-called Reagan revolution of 1980 but never really warmed to Ronald Reagan's wealthy, aristocratic vice president.

"Instead of all the talk of dumping Dan Quayle, we ought to be talking about dumping George Bush," conservative policy analyst Burton Pines said during a discussion of the president's political woes on CBS-TV.

"Both conservatives and the Republican Party and then America would be better off if George Bush would do the honourable thing and abdicate," he said, echoing sentiments expressed by well-known columnist George Will.

Asked on the same TV show if he thought Mr. Bush could overcome Mr. Clinton's high poll leads by the November 3 election, conservative fund-raiser Richard Viguerie replied: "I seriously doubt it."

"The president should do the honourable thing: Resign and... be the architect of a Jack Kemp for president ticket and Jim Baker for vice president," Mr. Viguerie said, referring to Mr. Bush's housing secretary and secretary of state.

Although there seems no chance whatever Mr. Bush would take such appeals to heart, the mere fact that these and other prominent conservatives are making such appeals in public illustrates how far Mr. Bush has fallen in the last 18 months.

At the end of the Gulf war, his public approval was at the astronomical level of 91 per cent. Even as recently as the turn of the year, potential Democratic candidates were opting not to compete in a 1992 presidential race that looked hopeless.

Now, the "Dump Quayle" and even "Dump Bush" talk within party precincts is starting to recall the political turmoil that bedeviled Democrat Jimmy Carter, the last one-term president, ousted by Mr. Reagan and Mr. Bush in 1980.

Apparently jolted by all the accumulating storm signals, Mr. Bush — who has often seemed both frustrated and baffled by political adversity — has agreed to scrub plans for an 11-day pre-convention vacation in Maine and spend the time campaigning instead.

Saudi council marks first move towards democracy

By Youssef Azme
Renter

RIYADH — King Fahd's widely expected naming next month of 60 men to a consultative (shura) council will mark Saudi Arabia's first, tentative move towards democracy.

Speculation is rife about the names of members of the council that would for the first time give other Saudis a say in the affairs of the state run by Al Saud family since the kingdom was founded by King Fahd's father 60 years ago.

Senior officials and diplomats dismiss the speculation, saying that no one really knows who will be chosen for the council or provincial assemblies the king promised on March 1. He said they would be appointed within six months.

"What is happening here is a far cry from western-style democracy. But it is significant in a country where there was no representation in the past," one diplomat said.

Saudis are eagerly watching for the names which will show whether the assembly will be simply a rubber-stamp affair or provide a real forum for the wide range of political opinion within the kingdom.

Diplomats said that the king had so far given no clues to his likely choices. But they expected the assemblies to be fairly representative of the middle ground of Saudi politics.

"There is no sense in appointing a council of yes-men," one western diplomat said.

The government has tended to stress that the council, provincial

assemblies and parallel constitutional reforms that would give Saudis for the first time a legal code apart from Islamic Sharia were a part of the country's normal progress.

But the diplomats said this did not obscure the pressure for change in the aftermath of the Gulf war.

The conservative country that had until then been largely insular was exposed to unprecedented influences, such as the arrival of some 500,000 American and other non-Muslim troops.

Its Islamic credentials were challenged for the first time by some mainstream Sunni Muslims who had so far looked to Saudi Arabia as the world's leading Sunni power and guardian of Islam's holiest shrines.

The diplomats said the Gulf war had radicalised militants both among liberals who wanted more democracy and personal freedoms and fundamentalists who yearned for what they saw as a purer Islamic government divorced from western influences.

They spoke of signals that showed a willingness to tolerate limited dissent. Only a political upheaval such as could result from a new conflict with Iraq was likely to upset the trend.

Extremists on both sides were unlikely to be included but moderates among liberals and fundamentalists could well be chosen for the male-only council.

Saudis have over the past few months appeared to enjoy an unparalleled degree of freedom to debate political issues as long as the legitimacy of Saudi rule remained unchallenged.

The pros and cons of democra-



Saudi Arabia had until the Gulf crisis been largely insular was exposed to unprecedented influences, such as the presence in the kingdom of hundreds of thousands of Western soldiers. How far these have influenced the conservative Saudi society remains to be seen

cy have been openly discussed in some newspapers and moderate fundamentalists preaching has been tolerated, the diplomats said.

"Radicals continue to have a hard time in the kingdom, but others are finding things a bit easier," one diplomat said.

One example was that Saudi liberals were allowed to attend a meeting in Kuwait three months ago that set up a pan-Gulf democratic forum, he said. This was unheard of in a country where no political parties are tolerated.

Another said that Saudi liberals were divided about the degree

of democracy suitable for the country.

With memories fresh of the fundamentalist sweep to power in Algeria that was only halted after army intervention earlier this year, some Saudi liberals have come to fear full-fledged democracy, he added.

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Financial Markets

Currency	NEW YORK CLOSE 8/30/92	NEW YORK CLOSE 8/31/92
Sterling Pound	1.9265	1.9275
Deutsche Mark	1.4768	1.4745
Swiss Franc	1.3160	1.3160
French Franc	4.9845	4.9800
Japanese Yen	127.50	127.10
European Currency Unit	1.3715	1.3825

Currency	1 MONTH	3 MONTHS	6 MONTHS	12 MONTHS
U.S. Dollar	3.31	3.31	3.43	3.68
Sterling Pound	10.06	10.25	10.31	10.31
Deutsche Mark	9.68	9.75	9.81	9.75
Swiss Franc	8.38	8.44	8.44	8.25
French Franc	10.09	10.25	10.31	10.31
Japanese Yen	4.06	4.00	3.84	3.81
European Currency Unit	11.00	11.00	11.00	10.87

Commodity	NEW YORK CLOSE 8/30/92	NEW YORK CLOSE 8/31/92
Gold	358.05	358.05
Silver	5.75	5.75

Currency	NEW YORK CLOSE 8/30/92	NEW YORK CLOSE 8/31/92
U.S. Dollar	0.668	0.670
Sterling Pound	1.2867	1.2931
Deutsche Mark	0.4526	0.4549
Swiss Franc	0.5077	0.5102
French Franc	0.1339	0.1346
Japanese Yen	0.5251	0.5277
Dutch Guilder	0.4013	0.4033
Swedish Krona	0.1246	0.1255
Italian Lira	0.0598	0.0601
Belgian Franc	0.02197	0.02208

Currency	NEW YORK CLOSE 8/30/92	NEW YORK CLOSE 8/31/92
U.S. Dollar	1.7430	1.7540
U.S. Dollar	0.03036	0.03460
Saudi Riyal	0.1775	0.1790
Kuwaiti Dinar	2.2400	2.3300
Qatari Riyal	0.1813	0.1825
Ugandan Shilling	0.2100	0.2250
Ugandan Shilling	1.7030	1.7200
Ugandan Shilling	0.1813	0.1825
Ugandan Shilling	0.3660	0.3870
Ugandan Shilling	1.5590	1.5790

Index	28/7/92	Close	22/7/92	Close
All-Share	139.79	140.88	139.79	140.88
Banking Sector	101.84	103.71	101.84	103.71
Insurance Sector	150.97	150.11	150.97	150.11
Industry Sector	192.54	192.90	192.54	192.90
Services Sector	179.26	178.17	179.26	178.17

ArabBanking Corp. reports higher first half profit

MANAMA (R) — Arab Banking Corporation (ABC), the biggest international Arab bank has said that its operating profit for the first six months of 1992 rose 24 per cent on the same period last year to \$124 million.

A bank statement said first-half pre-tax profits increased by 14 per cent. It gave no figures for net profit.

The bank — which is mainly owned by the Libyan Treasury, Kuwait's Finance Ministry and the Abu Dhabi Investment Authority — made a net profit of \$45 million during 1991 and awarded shareholders a \$50 million di-

vidend for the year.

It said total assets rose to \$20.1 billion on June 30, 1992 compared with \$19.6 billion on the same date the previous year.

Loans and advances increased to \$11.1 billion from \$10.1 billion at the end of the second quarter in 1991. Deposits also edged higher to \$16.9 billion last June 30 from \$16.2 billion in mid-1991.

Interbank deposits were barely changed at \$6.3 billion while customer deposits increased by nearly eight per cent to \$10.6 billion on June 30, 1992 from \$9.8 billion on the same date the previous year, the statement said.

JORDAN FINANCIAL MARKET

COMPANY'S NAME	TRADING VOLUME	TRADING PRICE	OPENING PRICE	CLOSING PRICE
JORDAN ISLAMIC BANK	1,395	3.770	2.770	2.770
JORDAN KUNAT BANK	6,231	1.870	1.860	1.860
THE JORDAN BANK	150,585	2.500	3.500	3.500
ARAB BANKING CORPORATION/JORDAN	409	1.960	2.000	2.000
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	70,152	3.840	3.860	3.860
JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK	474	3.150	3.160	3.160
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT/OLD	35,710	1.540	1.120	1.120
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT/NEW	33,000	1.090	1.080	1.080
NATIONAL PORTFOLIO SECURITIES	23,238	1.190	1.200	1.200
REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT FOR JORDAN	288,073	3.450	3.450	3.450
JORDAN BANK	9,060	113.000	113.500	113.500
JORDAN INSURANCE & REINSURANCE	3,393	2.650	2.650	2.650
JORDAN BANK OF INVESTMENT	7,230	1.450	1.450	1.450
THE NATIONAL ARAB INSURANCE	3,000	2.000	2.000	2.000
JORDANIAN ELECTRIC POWER	14,246	1.290	1.270	1.270
JORDANIAN TELECOMMUNICATIONS	6,713	4.040	4.110	4.110
LYSTONER & SONS	12,698	1.340	1.340	1.340
JORDAN NATIONAL SHIPPING LINES	1,185	2.350	2.370	2.370
UNITED MIDDLE EAST & CONCORD HOTELS	575,280	1.620	1.640	1.670
JORDANIAN MEDICAL CORPORATION	279	0.370	0.360	0.370
SECURITY EQUIP. RENTING & MAINTENANCE	12,950	1.010	1.000	1.000
PERA RETAILERS & EQUIPMENT LEASING	13,170	0.940	0.950	0.950
JORDANIAN REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT	34,130	0.690	0.700	0.690
JORDAN KUNAT CO. FOR AGRI. & FOOD PROD.	1,230	1.120	1.120	1.120
ARAB PAPER CONVERTING & TRADING	3,813	1.560	1.550	1.530
JORDAN DAILY	306	2.510	2.500	2.500
ARAB ALUMINUM INDUSTRY	82,570	7.750	7.790	7.750
ARAB PHARMACEUTICAL MANUFACTURING	23,687	9.400	9.350	9.350
THE JORDANIAN COMMERCIAL & AGRICULTURAL	5,833	5.800	5.810	5.830
ARAB CERAMIC INDUSTRIES INDUSTRIES	1,100	21.350	21.000	21.000
NATIONAL STEEL INDUSTRIES	50,663	6.660	6.670	6.660
DAR AL DAMA DEVELOPMENT & INVESTMENT	3,350	6.650	6.650	6.750
INTERMEDIATE PETRO-CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	4,944	3.660	3.660	3.660
THE JORDANIAN WOODWORKS	37,843	7.460	7.460	7.800
JORDANIAN CERAMIC INDUSTRIES	19,227	4.640	4.650	4.700
JORDANIAN GLASS INDUSTRIES	1,088	0.750	0.750	0.750
JORDAN PAPER & CARD BOARD FACTORIES	28,609	5.000	5.000	5.000
ARAB CENTER FOR PHARM. & CHEMICALS	718,001	3.060	3.080	3.210
UNIVERSAL CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	14,690	13.500	13.400	13.360
RAJAT INDUSTRIES	18,428	3.350	3.350	3.350
WOOLLEN INDUSTRIES	1,304	1.640	1.630	1.630
JORDAN INDUSTRIES & MACHINERY	6,446	1.110	1.110	1.090
SPINNING & WEAVING	31,694	3.090	3.090	2.930
JORDAN WOOD INDUSTRIES / JATCO	350	2.550	2.500	2.500
NATIONAL CABLE & WIRE MANUFACTURING	47,775	6.500	6.500	6.500
JORDAN SULO-CHEMICALS	14,463	3.620	3.620	3.610
THE JORDAN CEMENT FACTORIES	31,861	1.350	1.260	1.260
JORDAN PRECAST CONCRETE INDUSTRY	29,194	0.550	0.590	0.580
UNIVERSAL WOOD INDUSTRIES	507,732	5.120	5.100	5.070
ARAB INVESTMENT & INTERNATIONAL TRADE	599,393	2.170	2.170	2.360
JORDAN TOBACCO & CIGARETTES	1,344	21.000	21.000	21.000
JORDAN PETROLEUM REFINERY	13,658	0.360	0.350	0.330

Russia not following IMF instructions

MOSCOW (AP) — The Russian Government has stated flatly that it is obeying domestic needs and policies first in reforming its economy, and not the "demands" of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) or other outsiders.

The statement by Deputy Prime Minister Alexander Shokhin was one of the fiercest public rejections yet of strict IMF conditions for foreign aid to the haggard economy that Russia inherited from the Soviet Union.

Western governments have promised a 24 billion in aid for Russia to make the transition to market economy.

But Russian and IMF officials have differed on specific reforms, particularly the freezing prices for oil and other energy sources that make up the backbone of the economy. President Boris Yeltsin has refused to lift all controls quickly, saying Russians would rebel against higher prices.

"We are going to maintain the course of our economic policies, with the goal of keeping down inflation... and bringing down the budget deficit," Shokhin said at a press conference by top ministers in Yeltsin's government.

"There will be some 'correction' of our measures, but I would like to state officially that we are proceeding not from the demands of the International Monetary Fund... but first of all from the tasks of our own domestic poli-

U.S. economic slump deeper than expected

WASHINGTON (R) — A new report showing the U.S. economy fell into a deeper slump than first believed may help explain why Americans are so gloomy even though Bush Administration officials are upbeat about the outlook.

A report released last Thursday by the U.S. Commerce Department showed that the recession was deeper than thought and that it is taking longer for the economy to crawl out of the hole than previously realized.

"Maybe this is confirming that people were feeling more pain than the statistics were suggesting," said Thomas Gallagher, political analyst with Shearson Lehman Brothers Inc. It may also help explain why President George Bush has seen his political fortunes deteriorate, he said.

Recent public opinion polls have shown Bush slipping far behind his Democratic challenger Bill Clinton. But forecasts of the upcoming election based on the economy's performance show a close vote, Gallagher said.

Those analyses have not squared with public opinion polls that show the vast majority of voters believe the economy is moving in the wrong direction and that nearly half think things will get worse before they get better, he said. The new data help explain that difference, he added.

The Commerce Department revised its estimate of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for the last three years. It showed the economy contracted for nine months in 1990 and early 1991 instead of six months as previously estimated.

Instead of being "short and shallow" as previously claimed by the Bush Administration, the recession was about average in its severity when compared with other economic downturns since world war two, the department said. The economy has yet to make up for its lost output, the report showed.

The agency also reported that growth in the second quarter of this year slowed significantly from the first three months when the economy expanded at 2.9 per cent annual rate.

Growth slowed to a 1.4 per cent annual rate from April through June, far below the two per cent growth rate predicted by administration officials.

Bush and Treasury Secretary Nicholas Brady tried to put a positive spin on the data and the government did have some positive news. New home sales were up by 7.9 per cent in June and claims for new unemployment benefits were down in the week ended July 18.

"Most of the blue-chip economists predicted that the economy is going to get stronger the rest of the year, and I believe that they are right. But we have got to act now to guarantee that," Bush told workers at the superconducting super-collider, a giant atom smasher being built in Texas.

Brady said in a statement that growth has been positive for five consecutive quarters and "we believe 1993 and 1994 will be years of solid growth for the American economy."

Clinton said the data show administration officials are unaware of the economic pain Americans are suffering.

"We are in a crisis," Clinton said in a statement. "It's far more painful than this administration has ever understood."

Embattled Rome government scores key economic victory

ROME (R) — Only days after pushing through an emergency austerity package, Rome's embattled government won a major accord to end automatic wage indexation.

The government of Prime Minister Giuliano Amato, facing an economic emergency, was in a jubilant mood on Saturday after trade unions and employers reached an agreement.

Friday's late-night signing, which abolished the cornerstone of Italian labour relations since the 1950s, gave Amato credibility in his battle to cut inflation and reduce the budget deficit.

Abolition of the so-called "scala mobile" system, under which wages were increased in line with the cost of living, was the key platform of the month-old government's attempts to keep up with its European Community (EC) partners.

"In a difficult situation, which can get worse, this is the best signal we can give of a turnaround," Amato said after the signing.

His month-old government has been rocked by economic woes and the murder of Paolo Borsellino, a leading anti-mafia judge in the Sicilian capital Palermo.

Under the new wages system, workers will get a small payoff of \$18 per month for 13 months. Although still a regular increase, it is considerably less than the rises under the previous agreement.

In return, the government has pledged to keep a lid on state tariffs and to consider allowing a claim against tax for any unexpected increase in the cost of living.

Budget minister Franco Reviglio said the government had chosen the road of "shock therapy" to ensure Italy was competitive with EC partners.

"We need a high degree of responsibility and a political consensus or otherwise Italy could fall into a very serious financial crisis," he told weekly Panorama in an interview to be published on Monday.

The Rome government, which has to reduce the inflation gap between Italy and the rest of Europe by 1994, has set an inflation target of 3.5 per cent for 1993, down from around 5.5 per cent at present.

The recent Maastricht Accords laid down tough qualifications on inflation and public sector deficits for entry to the EC's planned monetary union.

Amato, whose government commands a small majority of 16 seats in the lower house of parliament, used a confidence vote on Wednesday to push through \$27 billion package of spending cuts and tax increases.

His next target is to reduce one of the most lavish pension schemes in the world, to bring health spending under control and to start cutting jobs in the public sector.

Reviglio said on Tuesday the 1993 budget law would need to save more than \$71 billion, around half of it in spending cuts, to push the deficit down below this year's level.

Boeing considers new plane

WASHINGTON (R) — Boeing Corp. may build a new version of its 737 jetliner that will fly farther and faster in an effort to counter an aggressive challenge by European aircraft maker Airbus Industrie. Boeing, the world's biggest commercial plane manufacturer, was stung last month when United Airlines passed up Boeing and agreed to lease 50 A320 aircraft and take options on 50 more in a 3 billion deal with Airbus.

Airbus, owned by government-backed companies in Britain, Germany, France and Spain, has been accused by Washington of using government subsidies to gain an unfair trade advantage.

Boeing officials said recently that they will sound out airline customers in the autumn on new designs for the venerable 737, which has been a workhorse for airlines worldwide on short- and medium-range routes.

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Battle for Sarajevo intensifies

SARAJEVO (R) — Muslim and Serb forces fought throughout the night in Sarajevo as the battle for control of the besieged Bosnian capital intensified, journalists in the city said Saturday.

Mortar and machinegun fire in northeastern sectors of the city could be heard until 5 a.m. (0300 GMT).

The Yugoslav News Agency Tanjug said Muslim fighters were continuing efforts to break through the lines of Serb forces who have blockaded Sarajevo since April.

Bosnian officials said Muslims had made advances despite suffering heavy casualties.

Five Ukrainian soldiers serving with the United Nations peacekeeping force in Sarajevo were wounded in attacks on the Bosnian capital Friday, German radio reported.

It said two soldiers were seriously injured and would be flown out to German military hospitals in Munich and Ulm.

A German Foreign ministry spokesman in Bonn confirmed Saturday that the soldiers were being brought to Germany.

"As far as we know, two soldiers are on their way," he told Reuters.

Sarajevo suffered its heaviest daily mortar bombardment for several weeks Friday as a chain of explosions shook the presidency building parliament and shopping streets.

The city's airport, used to ferry emergency aid into the beleaguered capital, also came under heavy shelling Friday.

U.N. peacekeepers had to suspend relief flights for several hours.

Hostile fire from Bosnian and Serbian positions have forced a

U.N. radar battery manned by the Ukrainians in Sarajevo to abandon its ceasefire monitoring mission four times in less than two weeks, U.N. sources said Thursday.

The Soviet-made radar unit is in ended to identify artillery and mortars fired in violation of the U.N.-monitored Sarajevo ceasefire. The unit is dug in on a hilltop between Bosnian and Serbian lines northwest of the city.

The bombardment closed the airport just as General Lewis Mackenzie, the outgoing Canadian commander of U.N. peacekeeping forces in Sarajevo, was about to take off, Croatian Radio said.

Meanwhile the leader of the Bosnian Serbs issued a warning Friday to Muslims that they could be squeezed out of an accord to divide Bosnia in two unless they agreed to negotiate.

Returning from talks in London where Muslim representatives refused to negotiate with the Serb side, internationally blamed as the aggressors in the three-cornered war, Radovan Karadzic said Serbs and Croats in Bosnia now had few differences.

"The hostile activities between the Serbs and Croats ... can soon be overcome because there are very few controversial issues in what parts of Bosnia-Herzegovina are for the Croats and what parts for the Serbs," he told a news conference.

Bosnia's Muslim foreign minister, Haris Silajdzic, said in London any division of Bosnia would produce ethnic splits "drawn in blood" and refused to negotiate while fighting continued. "We will not talk gunpoint," he said.

Mr. Karadzic said Serbs might soften their position on borders.



Civilians run across the street during sporadic sniper fire in the centre of Sarajevo

"The Serb side is willing to make some concessions so as to enable the Muslims to have their own canton."

"There is increasing support in Europe for the idea that Bosnia-Herzegovina should be divided into two parts."

"The Muslims are not an ethnic group, nor a nation in themselves, but just a religious group," he added. "It will be much better for the Muslims to start negotiations immediately."

Muslims outnumber Serbs in Bosnia but Serb military forces control most of the republic. Sarajevo, the Bosnian capital, and other towns are under siege by Serb troops and tens of thousands of Muslims have been forced to flee the Serb policy of "ethnic cleansing."

Mr. Karadzic also said his

proposed Serbian Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina would demand a section of the Adriatic coast be included in its territory. On the old map of Yugoslavia a long strip of Croatia, including the city of Dubrovnik, seals off Bosnia almost completely from the sea.

"The Croatian boundary along the sea line is preposterous," Mr. Karadzic said.

"Those who have the hinterland should also have the coast ... Bosnia-Herzegovina would be satisfied with a small part of the coast east to the Montenegro coast" south of Dubrovnik, he said.

He denied reports that Muslims were being held in concentration camps in Bosnia, countering that Serbs in Muslim areas were being used as hostages.

Azeris recapture several villages in Karabakh

MOSCOW (AP) — Azerbaijani forces mounted a counter-offensive in the disputed area of Nagorno-Karabakh Friday, recapturing several villages from the Armenians. News reports said both sides suffered heavy losses.

Azerbaijani People's Front and the Georgian News Agency Iprinda reported fierce clashes and dozens of people wounded around Agdere, a regional centre in Nagorno-Karabakh.

Near the village of Bulukdz in the Lachin area, a small Azerbaijani unit tangled with about 40 Armenian fighters, killing 13 and wounding 22 of them, the People's Front reported. In fighting over another village in the region, seven Azerbaijani fighters and 17 Armenians died, the reports said.

The Azerbaijani Turan News Agency said four Azerbaijani soldiers were killed and six wounded in the Armenian shelling of the village of Agdagan.

It also quoted the Azerbaijani Defence Ministry as saying that three villages taken by the Armenians on July 29 — Demerli, Magavuz and Ashagi Oratag — were recaptured by the Azerbaijani forces.

Before dawn Friday, an Azerbaijani SU-25 fighter jet bombed the Armenian settlement of Khodzhal and killed two people, the Pro-Armenia news service said. Two more people died in an overnight shelling from Nakhichevan, an Azerbaijani-led region cut off by Armenia, Armenia's Defence Ministry reported.

Azerbaijan and Armenia have been fighting for four years for control over Nagorno-Karabakh an Armenian enclave within Azerbaijan.

In the secessionist Trans-Dniester area of eastern Moldova, meanwhile, assassins armed with rifles and rocket-propelled grenades attacked a police station in the town of Bendery, killing two officers and wounding 16.

The identity of the attackers was not immediately known. "Moldovan and Trans-Dniester forces... have found out that neither side started the attack last night," said Gheorghe Munteanu, a Moldovan Defence Ministry spokesman.

The Trans-Dniester government press office reported four other people were wounded in Bendery, 65 kilometres east of the Moldovan capital of Kishinev. Three were civilians and one was a Cossack.

Both the Moldovan Defence Ministry and Bendery Defence Committee maintain that the attackers, who have repeatedly opened fire in Bendery during the past several days, are a group of combatants not acting under orders from either Moldovan or Trans-Dniester authorities.

Nikolai Kostishin of the Bendery Defence Committee said he hoped the 1,200 Russian peacekeepers that arrived in the town this week will help put an end to the fighting.

No wreckage found at Thai Air Crash site

KATHMANDU (R) — Nepali troops reached the site where colleagues reported spotting the wreckage of a Thai Airways Airbus carrying 113 people and found nothing, a senior police official said Saturday.

He said a result of the report, police and army teams searching on foot had been ordered to fan out over a much broader area to search for the wreckage of a plane which disappeared from radar screens near Kathmandu Friday.

An army foot patrol reported spotting the wreckage from a distance Friday, but darkness and heavy monsoon rains prevented them from reaching the site until Saturday, he added.

The rain, which continued into Saturday morning, severely hampered search and rescue operations, blinding helicopters sent towards the reported crash site and forcing them to return to Kathmandu.

But the rain eased considerably later Saturday morning and the official, who asked not to be identified, said helicopters were able to return to the search.

The search area had now expanded to a broad area of heavily forested and rugged Himalayan foothills south of Kathmandu, he added.

The Thai Airways International Airbus 310-300 disappeared from radar screens early Friday afternoon and there appeared to be little hope of any survivors. "Only those who believe in miracles can expect to see any survivors in that wreckage," said Royal Nepal Airlines pilot S.R. Sharma who spent an hour flying around in a vain attempt to contact the Thai aircraft.

106 killed in Chinese plane crash

At almost the same time as controllers lost contact with the Thai aircraft at around 0700 GMT Friday, a YAK-42 airliner on a Chinese domestic flight

crashed in a ball of flames as it tried to take off from east China's Nanjing Airport, killing 106 people and injuring 20.

The three-engine aircraft, built in the former Soviet Union and operated by the China General-Purpose Airline Company, failed to lift off and ended in flames about 600 metres beyond the runway, the New China News Agency said.

The plane was flying from Nanjing, capital of Jiangsu province, to Xiamen in south east Fujian province carrying 116 passengers and 10 crew members. There were 99 passengers and 14 crew aboard the missing Thai airliner, Flight TG 311, when it left Bangkok Friday.

Thai Airways said that of those passengers whose nationalities were known, 31 were Nepalis, 21 Japanese, 11 Americans and five each from Belgium and Finland. There were also four Germans, three Spaniards, two each from Israel, Britain, Canada, South Korea and Thailand, plus one New Zealander and one Australian.

All the crew, apart from one Japanese, were Thai.

In Tokyo, an aid organisation said seven of the Japanese aboard were aid workers heading for Nepal, a landlocked Himalayan kingdom that ranks among the world's 10 poorest nations.

A team of 15 investigators led by the airline's executive Vice President Udom Krisnamakul left Bangkok for Kathmandu on a special flight Saturday morning, a Thai Airways spokeswoman said.

The airline said in Bangkok Friday the twin-engine Airbus went missing before it was due to land in Kathmandu. It is a tricky landing in a valley surrounded by rugged hills into which pilots have to spiral down.

Kathmandu air controllers said they had told the pilot to divert because weather conditions were too poor for landing and told him to head on a southeast course towards India.

Prosecution demands 4 years jail in French blood trial

PARIS (R) — A French public prosecutor demanded a four-year jail term for the chief accused in a trial of four ex-health officials over AIDS-contaminated blood banks in the mid 1980s.

She told a Paris court Dr. Michel Garretta, former director of the National Blood Transfusion Centre, should be jailed for four years and fined 500,000 francs (\$100,000).

Prosecutor Michel Bernard-Requin called for suspended sentences of four years for two other former health officials, and a suspended two-year term for the fourth person on trial.

Mr. Garretta and another former centre official, Jean-Pierre Allain, are on trial for fraud, while two others are accused of criminal negligence.

The four are accused of allowing blood they knew to be contaminated with AIDS to be given to haemophiliacs.

Some 1,200 haemophiliacs contracted the AIDS virus from the transfusions, 256 of whom have

died. Lawyers for victims say as many as 4,000 other people were infected with the deadly virus.

The trial, which began last month, has included harrowing testimony from people who were infected, or their relatives.

Some victims and their supporters have staged protests outside the court. Garretta has argued that he could not bear responsibility for a series of mistakes in the health system involving dozens of people.

Some victims and their lawyers have called for the net to be cast wider and for politicians to be brought to trial.

Two lawyers Monday brought a suit against three former ministers, including former Prime Minister Laurent Fabius, for them to be tried for poisoning.

This would require the former ministers to be impeached by parliament and is viewed as unlikely.

Column

Mystery object found in hunt for Loch Ness monster

DRUMDROCHT, Scotland (R) — Scientists using sonar equipment to try to solve the riddle of Scotland's Loch Ness monster said they had made underwater contact with a mysterious object. A submarine used by the Project Urquhart Expedition probing the loch in search of the enigmatic creature affectionately known as Nessie tracked the unexplained object for two minutes before losing contact. Expedition official Robert Manson said: "We found an underwater target which cannot be explained. It was loud and solid sounding and to the opinion of the sonar operator was the largest mid-water echo he had never found in the loch." A Norwegian survey ship, the Simrad, is being used to conduct the first detailed study of Britain's largest inland lake since early this century. There has never been confirmation of the existence of "Nessie", the name given to what some believe is a descendant of the dinosaurs lurking deep within the loch's waters. Nessie's fame has created a legend that has spawned an entire tourist industry attracting thousands of visitors hoping to catch a glimpse of the beast.

Britain's tailor to the stars has AIDS

LONDON (R) — Tommy Nutter, Britain's tailor to the stars, is seriously ill with AIDS, his spokeswoman said. Mr. Nutter, 49, who pioneered flared trousers in the 1960s, has included Michael Jackson, Elton John, Mick Jagger and Diana Ross among his customers. The Beatles wore his creations when they appeared on the cover of their Abbey Road album. Personal assistant Sue Roberts said he was being treated at a London Hospital. "Mr. Nutter has been diagnosed as having AIDS. His condition is serious. The business is unaffected and we will continue as normal."

Pet parakeet seeks a home

YARMOUTH, Nova Scotia (AP) — Polly wants a passport? Bentley the parakeet and his vacationing owner were on a ferry home to the United States recently when they were stopped by U.S. customs in Bar Harbor, Maine. Under health regulations, the bird had to be checked out by a veterinarian, but because Bar Harbor isn't a designated point of entry for animals, the inspection couldn't be done there. Customs officials told Bentley's owner, who lives in Washington state, to re-enter the United States at an appropriate checkpoint or have the bird destroyed. She decided to give up Bentley and sent him back to Nova Scotia on the ferry — alone. For two weeks, the bird has been perched at the Canada customs office in Yarmouth. Customs officials were trying to find him a home.

Woman who burned husband wins new trial

LONDON (AP) — A woman who set fire to a husband she claimed was brutal and domineering won a new trial as the court of appeal ordered consideration of her claim of being a battered wife. Kiranjit Ahluwalia, 36, had been sentenced to life in prison in 1989 for the murder of her husband, Deepak. Her lawyer, Rohit Sanghvi, said it was the first time the court of appeal had recognised "the plight of the battered woman who kills her assailant." Three appeal judges headed by the Lord Chief Justice, Lord Peter Taylor, declined to release her conviction by reducing her sentence to manslaughter. But fresh medical evidence that Mrs. Ahluwalia might have been suffering from diminished responsibility at the time of the 1989 led the judges to overturn the conviction, Lord Peter said. The court refused to grant bail, though relatives had put up £10,000 (\$19,200) in sureties and promised that Mrs. Ahluwalia would live at her sister-in-law's home, where she could be reunited with her two children. Scores of supporters chanting "Kiranjit" and "freedom now" greeted her lawyers and family as they left the law courts. Pragna Patel, a spokeswoman for Southall Black Sisters who have campaigned on behalf of Mrs. Ahluwalia, said the judgement was a signal to battered women everywhere that they were "not forgotten."

WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

Problems mount for Managua government

MANAGUA (AP) — Problems continue to pile up for President Violeta Chamorro's government, which is tangled in a corruption scandal, at odds with its own party and fighting sporadic violence. The chief prosecutor Friday charged 11 people, including a former vice minister of the presidency, with misuse of funds. Two members of the cabinet, meanwhile, reportedly refused to sign a document expressing support for Mrs. Chamorro's chief aide and son-in-law, Antonio Lacayo, whose deputy was charged in the corruption case. Parliament failed to meet as scheduled for a fourth day, paralysed by a dispute in which Mrs. Chamorro's supporters are allied with the leftist Sandinista Front against their own centre-right coalition. The charges filed by prosecutor General Guillermo Vargas named Antonio Ibarra, who was Mr. Lacayo's chief assistant before the scandal broke out. "Mr. Ibarra is now in the United States. He did not file charges against Mr. Lacayo, but reserved the right to take further action."

'Vietnamese refugees are in danger'

HONG KONG (R) — The lives of some Vietnamese boat-people in Hong Kong camps may be at risk if they are forcibly returned to Hanoi, the New York-based human rights group Asia Watch said Sunday. Under an agreement signed with Hanoi in May, Hong Kong has begun to empty its camps of nearly 50,000 boat-people, not classed as genuine refugees. It expects the process to take several years. "Hong Kong has failed to recognise as refugees certain categories of Vietnamese who because of their particular history or ethnic background have been subject to persecution," Asia Watch said in its nine-page report. "In (one) group are individuals who could be sentenced to death for political crimes under present Vietnamese law," the report said. Asia Watch, said members of the Nung minority, some of whom fought for anti-Communist forces under the colonial French and later the United States, were in danger as were Vietnamese who joined anti-Communist groups in Hong Kong camps.

Georgia becomes U.N. member

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — The former Soviet Republic of Georgia became the 179th member of the United Nations. It is the final former Soviet republic to join the world body. Georgia was admitted by acclamation in the General Assembly, after a unanimous recommendation by the Security Council.

AIDS kills over 2,000 Ugandan troops

KAMPALA (R) — Ugandan soldiers who survived a five-year bush war are ultimately dying of AIDS at the rate 2,000 a year, President Yoweri Museveni was quoted as saying. "The war lasted five years and only 400 men and women died compared to 2,000 NRA soldiers who die of AIDS every year," the Star on Saturday newspaper quoted him as telling Ugandan troops. Mr. Museveni did not make clear which years he referred to. His address Friday at Mataga, outside the capital, was to his National Resistance Army (NRA) troops who survived the war that culminated in their 1986 triumph over Kampala's previous rulers. The NRA now has 90,000 men. The director-general of the Uganda AIDS Commission told Reuters about 1.5 million Ugandans — nine per cent of the population — are infected with the virus that causes AIDS. Other sources have quoted higher figures.

Italy to recruit spies against mafia

ROME (R) — The Italian government named its top anti-mafia official as head of civilian intelligence as it prepared to throw secret agents into the battle against organised crime. Prime Minister Giuliano Amato called for agents to be drafted in after two leading Sicilian judges, Giovanni Falcone and Paolo Borsellino, were blown up in Palermo, the island's capital. Secret agents were no longer needed to combat the former Soviet KGB secret services and should be used to infiltrate Italian organised crime instead, he said Tuesday. Sicilian-born Angelo Finocchiaro, Italy's anti-mafia high commissioner since 1991, was appointed head of civilian intelligence, an official statement said. Mr. Finocchiaro, 62, was civil governor in Palermo when the Italian state beat its most powerful blow against the mafia, a mass trial of some 350 gangsters in 1987.

Salvadoran labour leader killed

SAN SALVADOR (AP) — Unidentified gunmen killed a prominent labour leader in a small cafe in the capital and fled, a friend of the victim said. Ivan Ramirez, a leader of the National Federation of Labour Unions, died instantly after the attackers opened fire, federation spokesman Wilson Diaz told reporters. Mr. Wilson said union leaders blamed the assassination on rightist death squads. Mr. Ramirez has been accused of sympathising with leftist guerrillas and received death threats several times in the past.

Yeltsin rallies behind Kozyrev

MOSCOW (R) — President Boris Yeltsin and one of his closest aides rallied Friday behind embattled Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev, seeking to squash rumours the country's top diplomat would soon resign.

"The question of the resignation of the minister of foreign affairs has not been raised, not been discussed and belongs purely to the realm of political fantasy," a spokesman for Mr. Yeltsin said in a statement published by ITAR-TASS News Agency.

Information Minister Mikhail Poltoranin, who is also a deputy prime minister, later said Mr. Kozyrev was secure in his post. "He is flourishing and will continue to do so," Poltoranin said.

The minister, a close Yeltsin confidant, made his remarks at a news conference attended by most senior Russian government members, including Mr. Kozyrev.

Mr. Poltoranin's comments follow a whisper campaign, led by conservatives angered by what they see as appeasement of the West, that Mr. Kozyrev was finished.

Margot Honecker 'will not return' to Germany

BERLIN (R) — Margot Honecker has said she had no intention of returning to Germany where her husband Erich is charged with manslaughter for Berlin Wall killings.

German politicians want Mrs. Honecker, dubbed the "Elena Ceausescu of east Germany," to come back to Berlin because investigators are probing allegations she forced political offenders to give their children away for adoption.

As east German education minister from 1963 to 1989, Mrs. Honecker was a fierce exponent of Marxist-Leninist dogma and militarised the school system, leading some to compare her to the wife of former Romanian dictator Nicolae Ceausescu.

"Nothing pulls me back to Germany any more, it is not my country any more," she told Germany's ARD Television, which interviewed her on a plane from Moscow to Santiago.

Mrs. Honecker parted from her husband Wednesday when he returned to Berlin after 16 months as a fugitive. The next day, she flew to Chile where the couple's daughter Sonya lives.

The Bild tabloid said she looked nervous during the flight, chain-smoking and giving only vague answers to questions.

"I'll be telling everything to my daughter. I want nothing more than peace and quiet and a few good days with my grandchildren and my daughter," she told the newspaper.

German politicians demanded her return.

"It's high time Margot Honecker faces up to her responsibility as a leading politician of former east Germany," said Horst Eymann, the legal issues spokesman for Chancellor Helmut Kohl's Christian Democrats.

Mr. Eymann told Berlin's BZ newspaper that Mrs. Honecker should have the decency to return of her own free will before Berlin's justice authorities charge her.

But the head of a prosecution team probing crimes by east German's Stalinist leaders said there were no plans at the moment to seek Mrs. Honecker's deportation from Chile.

Allegations that Mrs. Honecker forced children into adoption were not yet backed up by detailed evidence of individual cases, investigative Christian Schaefer.

"We can't even think yet of charging Mrs. Honecker."

Investigators are finding it hard to prove that Mrs. Honecker gave direct orders to local bureaucrats to declare parents unfit to bring up their children.

The prosecution's main evidence is some 250 letters which distraught parents wrote to Mrs. Honecker, complaining over the loss of their children.

Similar problems plague another investigation into a home known as "Margot's concentration camp," where truant children were driven to suicide by brutal staff.

"The Berlin justice authorities must speed up their investigations," said Detlef Kleinert, a legal expert for the Free Democratic Party in the German parliament.

Meanwhile, the trial of former

east German Communist leader Erich Honecker could take two years or more — if it is held at all, justice authorities said Friday.

And German Foreign Klaus Kinkel, who formerly held the justice portfolio, expressed scepticism that Mrs. Honecker could be convicted, because Western criminal law was ill-equipped to handle acts of an extinct Communist state.

Mr. Honecker, 79, who ruled east Germany for 18 years until overthrown in a 1989 popular revolt that led to the country's absorption by west Germany a year later, was arraigned in Berlin on 49 counts of manslaughter Thursday.

He was arrested after abandoning a life of exile in Russia for 16 months, the last seven in Chile's Moscow embassy, and flying home to Berlin Wednesday night.

Mr. Honecker is to remain in Berlin's Moabit Prison hospital pending a ruling on his physical fitness that will largely determine whether he will stand trial, tentatively scheduled for the end of October at the earliest.

Berlin State Justice Minister Jutta Limbach told Bild newspaper that Mr. Honecker's trial, for which a 783-page charge sheet has been drafted, would take "24 months or longer."

Mrs. Limbach again denied suggestions that Mr. Honecker would be subjected to an inquisitorial "shot trial" by west Germany keen to "settle accounts" with an unrepentant Stalinist who helped enforce Germany's cold war division for 40 years.

"You will see it will be a trial based solely on principles of criminal law," she said on German television.

But can a court return convictions for deadly acts of an internationally recognised state which legalised the use of force to "secure" its borders and made no distinction between law and Communist ideology?

Mr. Kinkel, who as justice minister from December 1990 to May 1992 monitored abortive prosecutions of east-German politicians and border guards, was doubtful.

"Our system of justice is not prepared for what we call 'government crime,' namely for the fact that east Germany had its own system of values in many respects, that it turned its back on certain areas of constitutional norm," he said.

"This makes prosecution so difficult and will cause us great trouble and headache in coming to terms with the terrible occurrences under this (Honecker's) regime," he told the Hamburger Abendblatt newspaper.

Hinting at a strong possibility of acquittal for Mr. Honecker, Mr. Kinkel said he could well imagine a verdict that would be psychologically hard for east Germans to grasp.

Hansgeorg Brautigan, presiding judge in the case, said the trial would be held only if medical examinations of Mr. Honecker in the next two months showed he has fit to withstand it.

Witnesses described Mr. Honecker as robust and alert for his age. But he underwent cancer surgery in 1989, two months before he lost power, and is said to have suffered kidney ailments.

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